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EDITORIAL

Christianity as its own Adversary

What Marx meant by Religion

All attacks which are being made in our days upon the Christian faith can be summarized in the famous expression of Karl Marx, that religion is the opium of the people. It is therefore interesting to inquire in which context and with what meaning Marx uses that phrase, and especially what he means by religion.

In the essay on A Criticism of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right, the paragraph which contains the phrase is preceded by a paragraph which gives the following definitions of religion: "Religion is the general theory of this world . . . its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, its general basis of consolation and justification, the fantastic realization of the human being . . . It is the spiritual aroma of the world". The first thing which strikes us about these formulations is that Marx attacks an attitude the centre of which is man rather than God. It seems therefore a somewhat unexpected conclusion when we read further on in the same essay: "the criticism of religion ends with the doctrine that man is the supreme being for mankind". For we must ask Marx: Was man not always the supreme being in this kind of religion? Is this religion of a "spiritual aroma" anything but the attempt

of man to save himself? And if so, is there anything revolutionary in the conclusion that man is the supreme being for man?

In fact, the Marxist attack is not so much a fundamental critique of man-centred religion as the open admission of its presuppositions. Since the Renaissance men have tried to liberate themselves more and more completely from any super-human ties. Marx draws final conclusions from this development. The great significance of his attack is not in its critical aspect, but in the fact that he shows up what underlies the bourgeois faith in an autonomous and in the last resort godless conception of life. Marx makes it clear that the Christian forms of life which had continued to exist, though their real content had largely disappeared, can no longer live on. All that he proves is, that in the last resort man-centred religion is merely "ideological"¹, and as such based on illusion.

It would then seem that we need not take Marx's attack very seriously. These Christian forms of life, this whole outward structure of Christian civilization is rapidly breaking down in any case, and so his attack looks rather like a Quixotic struggle against the windmills. He does not seem to attack the real thing, namely faith in a living God, but rather the hypocritical exploitation of such a faith for egotistic purposes. He seems even to enter into alliance with the Bible, for the kind of religion which he attacks is precisely that of the pharisaism which Jesus denounces. Could one think of a better title for the parable of the Good Samaritan than: "Religion is the Opium for the People"? Does not that parable illustrate magnificently how men interested in finding "moral sanctions" for their own desires and groping for some "spiritual aroma" become so "religious" that they are no longer able to hear the concrete call of God?

There is, however, a very great danger in this all too easy conclusion that the religion which Marx attacks has nothing to do with the only religion in which as Christians we are interested. For such a conclusion, while it is true in theory, is not true in practice. Marx's attack is completely beside the point in so far as it is directed against the faith of the Bible. But it is not

¹ See the article by Paul Tillich in this number.

beside the point in so far as it is directed against us. It is a fact that the religion of which Marx speaks exists and continues to exist under the name of Christianity. All of us who believe in a living God are at the same time constantly tempted to become "religious" in the sense of Marx's definitions. And in so far as we give way to this temptation, we show Marx to be right, and become living arguments against God. We want "enthusiasm" in our life, we want "moral sanctions", we want "consolation and justification", and we want a "spiritual aroma". By mixing up God with these desires we create the situation in which the great misunderstanding arises of which Marx and his followers have become victims. It is only too easy to empty and change the Gospel of the living God to such an extent that it becomes as deadening as opium.

Nehru's View of Religion

The most impressive proofs of the fact that Christians are the worst adversaries of Christianity are surely to be found in the non-Christian world. I think especially of the attitude of Jawaharlal Nehru which has found such very clear expression in his autobiography. The example of Nehru is significant not only because of his very great influence upon the youth of his country, but especially because he comes himself from a great religious tradition, and approaches the subject without any marked prejudice. In fact, it becomes clear from his chapter "What is Religion?", that he has really struggled with the question, and that he suffers for not being able to agree with his friend and leader Gandhi on this point. It is therefore important to discover what impression religion in general, and Christianity in particular, has made upon his mind as he has come to know it both in India and in Europe.

According to Nehru, "the religious outlook does not help, and even hinders, the moral and spiritual progress of a people, if morality and spirituality are to be judged by this world's standards and not by the hereafter. Usually religion becomes an asocial quest for God or the absolute, and the religious man is concerned far more with his own salvation than with the good of society. The mystic tries to rid himself of self and in the process

usually becomes obsessed with it". He illustrates this condemnation with various examples, largely taken from Protestantism, and more especially from the Church of England, of which he says that "it is remarkable how that Church has served the purposes of British imperialism and given both capitalism and imperialism a moral and Christian covering".

We cannot take too seriously the fact that it is possible to be an intelligent and not unsympathetic observer of religious movements and to hold this view of religion including Christianity. I know, of course, that Nehru has some specific reasons for doubting the relevance of religion to human life. He is on the one hand filled with horror in contemplating the damage which the interreligious conflicts have done to the cause which he cherishes. On the other hand, he is naturally very sensitive about the existing connections between the imperial policy of Great Britain and the attitude of the Christian Churches. But the fact remains that a man who does not take his starting point from a blind hate against religion and in fact seems to have a secret admiration for many religious people, cannot see anything else in it than that it is "self-centred and egotistic".

As in the case of Marx, it is easy to see in the case of Nehru, that he has not yet begun to discover what real Christianity is all about. That the Christian faith means the meeting with a super-human reality, which takes and which holds the initiative; that therefore it is not a quest for the absolute, not even for the satisfaction of the desire for salvation, but something utterly different, namely, the act of obedience to a God who reveals himself and who calls us to action in this world; these things seem never to have entered into his horizon otherwise than as pious platitudes which cloak very human desires. Nehru does not seem to have discovered that Christianity at any rate stands and falls with the affirmation that God is. Therefore in the last resort he discusses a purely human phenomenon upon its purely human merits.

But again, it would be wrong to consider that his condemnation has therefore no real bearing on our Christian position. God alone knows whether Nehru has ever had a chance to hear His Voice. But we are responsible for the fact that he has been able to arrive at this picture of Christianity

which finally amounts to a complete caricature of the real thing. We have to answer the question how it has happened that a man like Nehru does not find himself forced to face the real issue which is that of the reality of God and His revelation in Jesus Christ. The one striking argument against Christianity is once more the Christian.

We need not continue this list of illustrations. Every one who has done evangelistic work, especially among the younger generation, knows that the one really difficult question which one has to face in this connection is: "But the Christians?" I know, of course, that there are many who are grateful that this objection allows them to avoid facing the fact of God and of His Call. But we specially need to be reminded that we constantly add a human offense to the divine offense inherent in the Gospel. And what is this offense? It is not, as too many think, that we are no saints. The world is quite able to understand that. But the offense goes much deeper. It is that our words and acts create the impression that, when we say God, we really mean "religion", that is to say, ourselves. We preach the Christian faith in a living God, but the world asks us what are the things for which we are really living, and comes to the conclusion that these are not God, but merely human satisfactions.

The Break-down of Christian Forms of Life

When we see clearly that the attacks upon Christianity are primarily attacks upon the Christians, the perspective in which we see the great struggle between the Christian and the anti-Christian forces changes. We must then say with Paul (I Cor. v, 12): "Outsiders it is no business of mine to judge. No, you must judge those who are inside the Church, for yourselves; as for outsiders, God will judge them". And we see then at the same time that the present situation is an opportunity for purifying the Christian situation and the Christian witness. Somehow it becomes extraordinarily clear today that God and "religion", the Kingdom of God and the status quo, the Gospel and the world of Christian forms do not belong together. We stand at the end of a period in which Western civilization could

retain the Christian forms of life without any Christian content. Using an image of Chesterton, Nehru describes organized religion as a fossil which is the form of an animal or organism from which all its own organic substance has entirely disappeared, but which has kept its shape because it has been filled up by some totally different substance. Indeed, in our so-called Christian countries during the last centuries men have tried to hold on to Christian morals, Christian conventions and a vague Christian conception of life; at the same time, they have refused their personal allegiance and obedience to the Christian God. Men spoke of God, and atheism was unfashionable; for God was very useful to cover up the fact that men had broken away from the Biblical faith. But in reality civilization lived upon faith in the sovereignty of man.

The Churches have not had the courage to call this evil by its true name. They felt altogether too much at home in a world which treated them outwardly with a certain respect and let them continue to exist, even though the real message of the Church, the message of the sovereignty of God over all life, was no longer heard or accepted. And now in our days this whole world of forms is breaking down. We have reached the limit of this process of the emptying the faith of its content. The unreality of so-called Christian civilization has become visible to all.

The result is on the one hand, that men have the feeling that they have been deceived, and that there is a great outbreak of anger against this Christian masquerade. But the result is on the other hand, that the Churches are suddenly forced into a position in which they must say clearly what they stand for. Do they really mean business when they say that they exist to proclaim and obey the will of God? Are they willing to live in this world according to His Will? Are they willing to forget all the small and big concerns which have crept into their message, but which have nothing to do with their main witness? Are they willing to attack themselves with the same thoroughness with which they are being attacked from the outside? A new discussion with the world becomes possible only if they do that, and if they do it in such a way that men can see clearly that the Churches mean to live for their one God-given task, and for this task alone. For only so does it become clear that the Church

does not exist to defend some antiquated conception of life or of morals, or to help men to take their different tasks in the world a little less seriously, or indeed to back up the powers that be, but that it only exists to call men to obey that sovereignty which seems at first a foreign sovereignty, but which is in reality the only one which offers freedom.

The Church as the Church of God

Our task is then to admit very frankly all that the critics say against our religion; and even to tell them that it is much worse than they think themselves. Most of us could write a chronique scandaleuse of the Church which would make the attacks of the outsiders appear as innocuous. But once we have done that, the discussion is not ended. Then it is that the real question arises: "What about God?" We are not to defend the Church as it is, or our so-called religion. If our present Church has to be destroyed as our present Christian civilization has already been destroyed, we will let that happen without murmuring, if only out of the ruins new life with God and a new obedience to His Word may come forth.

Only by separating very clearly our personal concerns and the cause of God can we speak convincingly to the present world. In the face of the great misunderstanding, for which we ourselves are responsible, that faith means the human attempt to make life more comfortable, the only thing that can help is the objective preaching of the message of God. We are not to be lawyers who defend their cause by every possible means; we are to be witnesses who tell the story of what God has done and is doing.

The hopeful aspect of the present situation is that the attack upon the Church and upon the Christians brings into existence a truer and purer Church, that is to say a Church which witnesses to the truth of God, and which forces its adversaries into a position where they must make up their minds about their attitude to God, and where they can no longer use the Christians as an excuse for not facing God's claims. The Church in Germany is one of the first Churches which God has called to this difficult but hopeful task. Thus it is asked to render

pioneering service for the whole of the Christian Church in the world, and it is, thank God, aware of this peculiar responsibility. It is therefore a sign of extreme short-sightedness to think of the Confessional Church in Germany as a Church which stands at the end of its life. The truth is, that it is one of the few Churches in the world which has made that new beginning to which God calls us today. Gradually the situation in other countries is becoming more and more similar to that of the Church in Germany. And so the time is approaching when in all countries the Church will be asked whether it still knows its own raison d'être, that is to say, whether it really believes that the Gospel in itself is the power of God.

The Church which lives in that faith has no fear of the world, for it is aware of an eternal mandate which no one can take away from it. It is therefore conscious of its own independence when it confronts the world. And precisely when it does that, it answers the challenge of the world as to its social significance, though that answer is very different from the one which the world expects. The Church will then have to say to all human ideologies that their absolutism is an absolutism on the wrong level and with a false object; for human life and human creations stand under the law of relativity and transitoriness, and the only proper level of absolutism is the one of the Kingdom of God, while its only proper object is the revelation of God.

When this is seen clearly, men are liberated from their romantic and finally unrealistic attitude in relation to human problems and human needs. All religions of this world, both those which manifest themselves in the form of political ideologies and those which express men's desire for self-realization, are opium for the people. But the obedience of faith takes the true reality seriously. For we can understand men only if we understand them as creatures of God. This implies at the same time an understanding both of their limitations and of their eternal calling. From the standpoint of the Gospel we dare not expect of men and human institutions what by their very nature they cannot give. But from the same standpoint we understand that in Christ, quite apart from that which they are at present, men are our neighbours, and therefore put the question to us: "What hast thou done to thy brother?"

The Church is far more indispensable to the world than we have ever dared to believe, until recent developments have revealed to us the inherent anarchy of human nature. Without the community for which the Church stands, human communities finally become a caricature of community. Life only becomes bearable when the tremendous contradictions between men, groups and nations are shown to be provisional rather than ultimate, and may therefore never be considered as fundamental cleavages between men.

We cannot be sufficiently thankful that we have been called to live in a time in which God makes these things so clear to us. Luther used to say, that the worst persecution which could come to the Church was that there was no persecution at all. For persecution means among other things that God is busy with His Church. Thus the Church gets a new opportunity to rediscover its own mission, to break out of its isolation, and to serve the world by giving it the witness of the Gospel.

V. 't H.

Grounds for Hostility to Christianity

NICHOLAS BERDYAEV

The world, which for a long era seemed to be Christian, is rapidly becoming de-Christianized. Christianity becomes something quite foreign to the world, or calls forth sharp hostility. In some countries there is a sharp de-Christianizing process, giving rise to oppression, as in the Soviet Union and in Germany. In other countries, such as France, *laicism*, has ceased to be militant, becoming increasingly indifferent. ✓ In any case, Christianity is losing quantitatively, although perhaps it is gaining qualitatively. What are then the reasons, the deeper grounds, for hostility to Christianity, which seem to be constantly growing in strength ?

An unemotional discussion of this disturbing question leads to recognition that both sides are at fault, not only the enemies of Christianity, but Christians themselves. In general, it is not suitable for Christians always to consider others at fault and themselves the innocent victim. Unquestionably modern civilization has seen a growing loss of the sense of the transcendental ; modern man has his interest exclusively in this world and its satisfactions, and prostrates himself before its various idols. Man cannot make himself an atheist, but turns into an idol-worshipper, he bows before false gods. This is one side of the question, but there is another. Christians have now to pay for the sins of the past. There are now signs of a Christian renaissance, but the epoch just preceding our own was one of a relapse of Christianity, an epoch of weakness and fatigue. The hostility of Nietzsche to Christianity is partly explained by the fact that he witnessed all about him a degraded Christianity from which the heroic spirit had departed. But the trouble was not only that faith had weakened, the fire of the spirit had been extinguished, that Christians had become neither hot nor cold. The trouble was that the initiative for creative activity in the world left the hand of Christians, that Christians too often took up a hostile attitude toward the search for truth and the

apprehension of justice in social life. The chief hindrance, preventing people from turning to Christianity, was Christians themselves, their betrayal of Christ's truth, not only in small factual matters, but a betrayal in principles. Spiritually inclined Hindus assert clearly that Christians of the West, such as they are, constitute the chief argument against Christianity. They say that Christians are less inclined to realize their Christian truths in life than the representatives of other religions, than Moslems, Jews, Buddhists, etc. And this is true. Yet it is only fair to say that Christianity is harder to realize, that it is more exacting.

Christianity a Religion of Slaves ?

When I began to dig into the arguments which modern man makes against Christianity, and especially to investigate militant atheism in the U.S.S.R., I came to the conclusion that there was one chief argument, one main reason for estrangement from Christianity and hostility to the faith. People of modern civilization who are inclined to be anti-Christian always say one thing, always present the chief argument : the Christian religion lowers man, rejects his activity and creativeness, teaches him to lay everything on God and on the grace which proceeds from God. Man is called to humility and obedience, he must humble himself before evil, darkness and injustice. Man is considered a sinful, fallen being, that is, incapable of building up a better life and unworthy of a better life. Thus Christianity appears as a religion of slaves. The creative activity of man, emancipating him from slavery, building up cultural values, assumes man's consciousness of his own worth, his strength, his capacities to lift himself to a better life.

When Christians try to object to this principal charge, all others being secondary, their position is not easy, for it is impossible to parry the blow and settle the conflict. I consider it an absolute lie that Christianity lowers man, rejects his activity and turns him into a slave. But there is a measure of truth in the accusation. Christianity has too often been used to degrade man and to justify his enslavement.

Christians very often draw just these conclusions from the teaching about the sinfulness of human nature. The creative calling of man has been inadequately revealed in the Christian's mind, and Christian truth regarding the construction of human society has been too little discovered. On the other hand, it is absolutely beyond doubt that Christianity does not lower but lifts man, and in Christianity you have the very deepest grounds for denial and overcoming the slavery of man. Christianity teaches not only that man is sinful, but also that man is made in the image and after the likeness of God, that he is a son of God, that God Himself became man and thereby lifted up human nature; it teaches that man is a free spirit, that in him there is a spiritual element which lifts him above the natural world and makes him independent of the kingdom of Caesar. The Christian leaven in the deep subsoil of human nature has made possible all processes for the emancipation of man from the power of nature and social forces. Christianity recognizes the supreme value of human personality, which cannot be transformed into a means or instrument. The ancient world did not know this meaning of personality, and subordinated it to the State. But between the eternal truth of Christianity and practical Christianity in history there has always been not only a difference, but often a complete gulf. The paradox of Christian history lies in the fact that many of the truths of Christianity regarding man and human society have been realized in life not by Christians, but often in fact by the enemies of Christianity. The slogans of the French Revolution — liberty, equality, fraternity — are of Christian origin. Christians themselves created the conflict between Christianity and freedom. They denied freedom and demanded obedience. But the trouble had a double character, for when the opponents of Christianity achieved freedom, the very process contained a poison which gave birth to new forms of slavery.

The Problem of Suffering

There is another argument put forward as the reason for loss of faith, and not only of Christian faith, but of faith in God in general. It is related to the accusation that Christian-

ity rejects the activity of man, but has a non-metaphysical character. The life of the world is full of evil and suffering, injustice triumphs, mastery belongs to the evil, not to the good. How can we reconcile this fact with the existence of God who is all-powerful and All-good, and with the Providence of God in the world? Many cease to believe in God exactly for the reason that they face this question. This is a modern form of Marcionism. It is in fact the only serious argument in favour of atheism. Considered in the light of an abstract monotheism this argument is even undeniable. But its strength is greatly lost in relation to the Christian faith, which is not an abstract monotheism. Christianity is the religion of a suffering and crucified God; the religion of sacrificial love, it proceeds from the fact of evil and suffering in the world. The Son of God comes down to the suffering world and takes its suffering upon Himself. But to modern man, deaf to the mystical side of Christianity, the Christian faith seems a compromise with evil and suffering, humility before injustice, a refusal to struggle. In this way the two hostile arguments against Christianity are joined together. If man freed himself from faith in God, he could at any rate freely struggle with his human activity against evil, suffering and injustice, and if he did not completely destroy them, he might diminish them, reduce them to the minimum. Belief in God is not only incompatible with the existence of evil, suffering and injustice, but even weakens energy in struggle against them. The achievement of human happiness is transferred to another, imagined world; in this real world it is proper to tolerate the most unjust suffering. Feuerbach and Marx made much use of this argument. In a vulgar and crude form it is used in anti-religious propaganda in Soviet Russia.

The mind of men in the nineteenth and twentieth Centuries has been deeply eaten into by rationalism. This rationalism has closed up the sources of living spiritual experience, the spiritual experience of evil and suffering in the world. The capacity of men for inner experience has been greatly lowered. Man has so to speak become a being of two dimensions — the dimension of depth has gone. But the experience of atheism is itself but an experience on the human

pathway, only a testing. In the atheism and struggle against God of such persons as Feuerbach or Nietzsche, there is depth, a cleansing process. It is necessary constantly to cleanse away human limitations from the idea of God. Christians have greatly misused in history the argument of the usefulness for salvation of suffering and of the cramping of life. It is exactly this argument which has called forth the greatest disgust and favoured a hostile attitude toward Christianity. This argument has had a hypocritical flavour in the mouths of those who were in privileged positions and suffered least, and who turned it toward those who were most burdened with suffering. Christianity truly recognizes that suffering has a positive meaning, and calls for a spiritual experiencing of the suffering of life. But one cannot from this draw the conclusion that Christians must increase the suffering of their neighbours; on the contrary, they must ameliorate their suffering. There is no basis for the argument that Christians should not struggle against suffering and injustice. Christians are called to seek the Kingdom of God and His truth, which means they must do everything possible for its full accomplishment in life. The Christian must carry his own cross, for each has his cross, but he must lighten the cross of his neighbour, he must have love and mercy for fellowmen. And this idea must have also a social expression. The attitude toward one's neighbour, the attitude of man to man, is not only a personal, but a social relationship. The one cannot be separated from the other.

Is Christianity Reactionary ?

It is in this connection that we meet with the strongest and most widespread cause of hostility to Christianity. Christianity is considered a socially conservative religion which has sanctified all social *régimes* from feudalism to capitalism. The Christian Churches have called for submission to the powers that be, have been hostile to social improvement. Christian confessions of faith have been considered a hindrance on the path to a more just and humane solution of the social problem. The social arguments

against Christianity are those which have been most widely used in anti-religious propaganda. It is this which has given rise to the growth of atheism in the working class. The labouring masses have given up believing that their lowered and oppressed position in society is sanctioned by religion, by the will of God; but at the same time they have also given up believing in God and Christ. Anti-religious propaganda is here moving along the line of least resistance. On the other hand, the propaganda of Christianity is made more and more difficult.

We must recognize that hostility to Christianity has historical grounds. Christians ought not to hide their guilt, the guilt not only of separate Christians, but also of Church communities. This consciousness itself will help to cleanse and revive Christianity. In the sources of Christianity, in the Bible, in the early Christian community, in Christian teaching itself, taken in pure form, viz., without outside social influence, in the teachers of the Church, especially the Eastern fathers such as St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great, we find nothing which would provide a basis for the accusations we have mentioned, for social hostility to Christianity. Rather the contrary, the very basis of Christianity demands a radical social change in human society, a movement toward the realization of the Kingdom of God. The accusation must be laid not against Christianity, but against the perversion of Christianity by Christians. The perversion consists in the fact that Christianity was understood solely as a religion of individual salvation and it was forgotten that Christianity is first of all the good news of the coming of the Kingdom of God.

But there will always remain a deep distinction between those who believe in the existence of a supreme spiritual world, in the attachment of man to the eternal life in God, and those who believe only in this world, in its self-sufficiency, in earthly joy, as the end of life. This has no connection with the social reasons for hostility to Christianity, being on a quite different plane. The defence of Christianity waits upon the construction of a new social apologetic, realizing itself not only in thought, but in action. But this social

apologetic cannot accede to the transformation of the Christian religion into a purely social religion. Christianity has a social side ; in it there must be revealed the truth regarding just and brotherly construction of human society ; but it is primarily and always will remain a mystical and spiritual religion. Here there can be no adaptation. The adaptation of Christianity to social interests, in the past, is exactly what weakened Christianity and gave rise to the falling away of believers. The truth of Christianity lifts itself above historical time, although it works in historical time, as a force for spiritual transfiguration. And it must be a force for the spiritual transfiguration of the social movement of our time, healing it of the hatred now lacerating the world. But Christianity can do this only in the name of justice, freedom, love, brotherhood.

The Conflict between Christianity and Science is secondary

There is one more reason for rejection of Christianity, which many consider decisive. They say that Christianity is in uncompromising conflict with science and is disavowed by science ; that Christian faith is possible only at a low level of scientific development ; that Christianity has maintained itself by refusing to allow freedom for scientific research. Apologists usually give largest space to the defence of Christianity against attacks based upon science, and try to reconcile Christianity and science. I am inclined to believe that the scientific disavowal of Christianity, and consequently its defence, have only secondary significance. The very conflict is only one of appearance and is based upon confusion. Hostility to Christianity and religion generally, always has not so much an intellectual as an emotional basis. The rational arguments are instrumental. Rationalism is found to be at the service of the emotion. There is no actual conflict between knowledge and faith, science and Christianity. Conflict is possible only on a single plane ; it does not take place in two quite distinct regions. The conflict can take place only when Christianity, or rather theology, maintains an obligatory connection between revelation and faith,

and antiquated, disproved, scientific and philosophical ideas and theories. All Catholics now recognize the truths taught by Copernicus and Galileo; no one fears the evolutionary theory in biology. The conflict takes place not so much in the realm of science as in the realm of philosophy. Of course, materialism, positivism and aggressive rationalism are not one with Christianity, but they do not constitute science so much as bad philosophy. Christianity is not to be joined with reason, but with the highest source of reason. The so-called scientific disproval of Christianity usually corresponds to a low level of education, the first stage of education. When in the Soviet Union they assert triumphantly that science has disproved Christianity, it is the adolescent in education who is speaking. Actually the motives of godlessness are different; the arguments from science are used only for a purpose having nothing to do with science. In so far as the same obscurantism exists in Christianity as has existed in all times, it, of course, conflicts with science, philosophy and culture in general. But Christianity, the religion of the incarnated logos, is not obscurantism; obscurantism proceeds from man, not from God.

In modern dictatorship, in modern totalitarian states, freedom of the spirit is denied and Christians experience oppression and persecution. This alters the position of Christianity in the world. In the past Christians, in whose hands was power, bespattered themselves by oppressing those who thought or believed differently. Now Christians are cleansed from this historic disease. For this reason Christians should, more than others, defend the freedom of the spirit, the worthiness of man, whose image is threatened from all sides. Many of the causes of hostility to Christianity have now become outmoded. But it is necessary to pay off the debts of the errors and sins of the past. A worthy and convincing reply to movements hostile to Christianity can only be given by a Christianity renascent and cleansed; only by a creative movement within the Christian world, by a faith more true to the sources of Christianity. Purely conservative replies satisfy no one; we need creative answers which will correspond to the nostalgia and agony of the modern world. It is

necessary to enter into the movement of the present world, into the troubling questionings of the modern man. In this hostility, which in part is ill-intentioned and based on ignorance, there is also a seriousness deserving attention and study. Man in his early youth passes through inner conflicts and testing. He lives by experience through the contradictions of life. Self-satisfied and stiffened dogmatism, disdaining all life experiences, all questioning, can give nothing to the man who is struggling in his search for meaning and truth. Not all fallen from Christianity have done so out of ill will ; there are those who have fallen away out of love for truth and justice. And this situation requires from Christians a creative answer which shall contain no smaller measure of love for truth and justice.

The Attack of Dialectical Materialism on Christianity

PAUL TILlich

It is neither important nor interesting to discuss the attack of non-dialectical materialism or of popular Marxism upon Christianity. The first, which may also be called metaphysical materialism, has not only lost its philosophical and scientific significance, but seems also to be disappearing as a popular attitude of mind. The second still exerts a strong influence in the struggle against Christianity both in Russia and elsewhere, but it owes its influence not so much to the force of its arguments, as to a traditional enmity of the radical movements against the Churches which is only partly thought out. The original deeper meaning of this enmity may still be found between the lines of the attacks of the Communist godless movement; but it is so covered up by propaganda and political hatred that discussion on this basis has become meaningless.

The attack of dialectical materialism upon Christianity is, however, of the greatest interest and should be taken very seriously. Though at the moment this attack has a smaller place in the public consciousness than that which comes from the neo-pagan nationalist movements, it has in reality greater importance for Christianity because its roots go deeper and have a deeper kinship to those of Christianity. By dialectical materialism is meant the philosophical and sociological theory which takes its starting point in Marx's dialectical analysis of capitalism; which seeks to interpret social and spiritual structures from the point of view of economics; which seeks to unite theoretical analysis and the practical desire for transformation, and which has more recently become enriched by elements of psycho-analytic theory.

The present writer does not write as a representative of Christianity who has to defend his conviction against the attack of dialectical materialism, but rather as one who tries to combine Christianity and dialectical materialism in his own mind, and for whom the antithesis between the two represents a dynamic element in his own thought. In order to clarify the terminology of this discussion it should be said, that "materialism" means in this connection a theory which takes its starting point in the productive powers of men and of their social organization as the "matter" of the historical process. It is therefore a theory which excludes an idealistic interpretation of history. This materialism is "dialectical" : 1. if it takes into consideration the total structure of society with all its inherent tendencies and antitheses, and thus excludes a primitive positivism ; 2. if it stands for the freedom of man's influence upon the natural and social phenomena as over against a primitive naturalism ; and 3. if its theory contains a critique of the dominant social powers, does not overlook the fact of the creative will, and thus rejects a pseudo-scientific detachment. The struggle with such an adversary, who is in many respects a companion in arms¹, is of the greatest importance for Christian theology. For a victory on this point includes fundamentally the victory over all the crude, popularized and propagandistic forms of the Marxist attacks upon Christianity.

The Attack in the Political Sphere

Dialectical materialism considers that ecclesiastical Christianity enters into alliance with the ruling political powers, and thus comes in conflict with the revolutionary movements which desire in the name of justice to change the social structure based on class distinction. This is for instance said to be true of the feudal period with its exploitation of the peasants sanctioned by the Church ; of the capitalistic period, with its exploitation of labour and colonial peoples, equally

¹ See the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Alcan, Paris), the most important of the philosophical sociological journals which appear at the present moment in the German language.

sanctioned by the Church. Proofs drawn from modern history which are generally advanced, are on the one hand Eastern Orthodoxy in its Czarist form, and on the other hand bourgeois Calvinism, both of which have opposed the labour movement. Arguments drawn from contemporary history are the one-sided pro-Fascistic attitude of the Vatican in the Spanish Civil War, Austrian "Austro-Fascism" with its violent suppression of the labour movement, and the weakness of the German episcopate which has waited for years for an anti-socialist alliance with National Socialism. Again, the indifference of all German Churches in the face of the persecution of Socialists and Jews, is often advanced as an argument to prove the solidarity between the Churches and National Socialism which is only broken when National Socialism interferes with the inner life of the Churches. Finally, the social structure of such Churches as the Anglican Church, which have no serious desire for the transformation of society, is often mentioned in this connection. The conclusion drawn from these arguments is that, whatever the original and fundamental attitude of Christianity to the idea of social justice may have been, ecclesiastical Christianity supports necessarily the ruling political powers against the revolutionary movements.

It is not a sufficient answer if Christianity simply points to the anti-Christian and anti-Church attitude of the revolutionary movements. For in the first place it is not true that these movements have all been anti-religious. They have only become anti-religious in the nineteenth century, partly because of reasons implied in the development of the bourgeois spirit, partly because of the one-sided opposition of the Church to these movements. And in the second place, the campaigns and acts of violence against the Church which have accompanied both the bourgeois and the Communist revolutions tell us much about the past, but very little about the future. These would only become an occasion for a fundamental conflict if the principles of the revolutionary movements were proved to be irreconcilable with Christianity; but acts of violence on the part of excited masses do not prove that this is so.

Again, it is insufficient to defend Christianity by pointing to its social philanthropy, for instance to the work of the inner missions. For in relation to these activities, it can always be said that they may be of help to the victims of the social exploitation, but that they do not remove exploitation as such. It may even be said that such help, which is surely indispensable and necessary, serves to strengthen the existing social system because it alleviates its worst consequences.

It is only possible to defend Christianity against these attacks if the facts upon which they are based are recognized and condemned, but also explained as implied in the structure of every religion which has become a social phenomena. As soon as a religion grows beyond the first stage of being a small sect, a conscious or unconscious process of assimilation takes place by which the Church becomes part of the given social structure with its relationships of power. One cannot blame Christianity or any other religious or philosophical group for this development. The only question is, how strong the critical forces remain which in the name of the original principles oppose the sociological and political consequences of this growing ecclesiasticism. It is not the assimilation to the social conditions of a given epoch, but the lack of a prophetic protest against the consequences of such assimilation which provides the basis for a justifiable attack upon Christianity. But such an attack is then fundamentally a *Christian* attack, quite irrespective of whether it comes from the inside or the outside.

Finally, Christianity can make a counter-attack and show that the movements for social justice have themselves their periods in which they are just "sects" and their periods in which they become "churches", and that therefore they have to suffer from the same tensions and the same distortions as the Christian Churches. Russia provides us with an extremely illuminating object-lesson on this point.

The Attack in the Psychological Sphere

The attack of dialectical materialism in the political realm has very great practical and propagandistic value

because it can always find support in further factual evidence; but theoretically it is not decisive at all. The opposite is true of the attack in the psychological realm. The notion of "ideology" is the strongest spiritual weapon which dialectical materialism has forged, not only against the bourgeois conception of life, but also against Christianity. A theology which is not able to resist the attack from this angle is lost, especially since this notion, which was originally merely sociological in character, has found further support in psychoanalysis¹.

The basis of the notion of "ideology" is that all psychical and social structures produce an expression in thought which does not possess objective validity, but which has only the power of subjective conviction. Thus the idea of transcendence is interpreted as the utopian expression of unsatisfied psychological tendencies or of unsatisfying social situations. The idea of the absolute becomes the expression of an ultimate need for security. The thought of God as Father is the symbolic projection of the authoritative tendencies in society, in the family, and in individual life. The struggle for inner peace becomes the sign of a need for escape from historical conditions which do not give peace. The anti-ideological critique becomes especially aggressive in dealing with religious notions which have direct social and political consequences, and which are therefore used by powerful groups unconsciously, and sometimes even consciously, in order to strengthen their power. An example of this is considered to be the notion of "divine blessings" which express themselves in economic success, and which are taken as signs that individuals, peoples or races have been specially

¹ It is interesting to note that on this point, as on so many others, dialectical materialism can base itself on dialectical idealism, and especially upon Hegel who in his *Jugendfragmenten* tries to show that the social and political conditions in the last period of the Roman Empire have created the transcendence of the divine, the consciousness of sin, and the need for grace. In his later system, the traditional Christian idea of transcendence was given up, and thus the way was clear for the attempt of Feuerbach to explain, and to explain away, the transcendent elements of Christianity through the use of psychology. Marx took his starting point from the younger Hegel, and replaced this psychological disintegration of the transcendent symbols by a sociological disintegration. But the psychological element is indispensable, and so in present day dialectical materialism it occupies a central place once more.

chosen by God. This form of religious ideology is particularly strong in Calvinistic countries ; but in the Lutheran countries the idea of dutiful obedience to the authorities renders similar ideological services to political absolutism and the economic forces upon which absolutism is based. In the past the conception of heavenly and earthly hierarchies has done a very great deal to support feudalism, and at the present time liberal and humanistic ideas are used to cover up the evils of economic exploitation.

The attack upon Christianity in the psychological realm is therefore directed against particular ideas which are denounced as being ideological, as well as against religion in general as being an ideology. In defending itself, Christianity should, however, not call in question the notion of ideology itself. To seek refuge in the idea of religious experience is of no avail since the conception of ideology implies precisely that particular psychological and social structures determine in advance the form and content of experience. Again, Christian theology should not pretend that the problem of ideology can be solved by self-examination of the Christian or the ecclesiastical consciousness. For the real danger does not lie in the cynicism which uses ideologies consciously, but rather in the good will and the honest conviction which become instruments of subconscious desires. It is therefore necessary, not only to accept the conception of ideology, but also to deepen it in the sense of a prophetic proclamation that every self-made god (" self-made " is the equivalent in Luther's language for " ideological ") is an idol, and that every doctrine which is in the service of national or individual desire for power is " false prophecy ". The notion of ideology has deep roots in the Christian insight into the reality of human life.

The notion of ideology itself must therefore be used in order to defend Christianity against the objection that it is mere ideology. Every particular reproach that a Christian doctrine is ideological must also be taken very seriously. In each case the question is to be raised whether it is a case of the unconscious or conscious abuse of a true idea, whether the idea in itself contains elements which are really ideological

and must therefore be rejected, or again, whether the idea as a whole is of an ideological character, and must therefore be given up altogether. *The only effective weapon against the objection that Christianity is an ideology, is constant suspicion on the part of Christianity, both of itself and of its own ideological tendencies.*

In this realm there is, however, also the possibility of a counter-attack. The suspicion must also be directed against dialectical materialism as soon as it has become the philosophy of individuals or of a group. The development of ideologies in the very worst meaning of that word is not less clearly visible in the socialistic movements than in Christianity. All human consciousness suffers from this same fatal tendency.

The Attack in the Philosophical Sphere

Dialectical materialism tends to consider all religion as ideology. The reason for this is not at all the generalization of the notion of ideology, that is of the opinion that all thought is *merely* the expression of a particular psychological or social situation. For Christianity and dialectical materialism are at one in rejecting such a conception which finally destroys itself. Nor is the reason to be found in the abuse which can so easily be made of religion. The reason is rather (both historically and systematically) in the philosophical critique which denies the possibility of any religious objectivity. On this point dialectical materialism simply imitates the critical and positivistic attacks upon religion. If this critique is true, and if therefore the content of the religious consciousness has no relation to any objective reality, there remains in fact only the subjective and ideological explanation of religion. It is impossible within the limits of this article to discuss the philosophical critique of the religious content, especially because this critique is also directed against the possibility of metaphysics, and presupposes therefore a fully developed theory of knowledge. The results of this critique are visible to everybody in the process of secularization which has not only come over the Christian nations, but over the whole of humanity. On the other hand, the success of the Christian

and general religious philosophical defensive cannot be denied. The religious groups demonstrate again and again a surprising vitality and have in many places passed to the spiritual offensive. This is the present philosophical situation in which dialectical materialism stands on the side of the critics. The question with which we are here concerned is, whether this attitude follows necessarily from the principles of dialectical materialism.

Christian theology would destroy the very basis of a possible discussion with dialectical materialism if it would simply give an affirmative answer to this question. But it would also cease to take the discussion seriously if it would simply answer negatively. It should rather acknowledge that the three following challenges made by dialectical materialism must be met : Christian theology must first of all *give up its alliance with idealistic metaphysics* which interpret existence as the appearance of an essence or an idea, thus idealize given reality and support an anti-revolutionary conservatism. Christian theology must, secondly, give up such conceptions of transcendence as weaken the *unconditional significance of social and political achievement* by stressing an other-worldly utopia and a purely individual solution. This leads on to the third and most fundamental challenge : Christian theology must show that *it does not hold to a second world* next to or beyond the world of experience, but that its contents are symbols for the transcendent meaning of the one world of experience ; and that therefore the contents of faith must not be understood as objects which have a peculiar existence in themselves, but as representing the meaning of our existence as we experience it. When that happens, the attack upon the metaphysical-mythical background of religion has lost its point, and in its place has come the question concerning the experienced meaning of existence and its expression in adequate symbols. Thus the conversation is transferred from the metaphysical to the religious level.

On this level, however, Christian theology can make a counter-attack and show that such conceptions of the meaning of life and such symbols are also implied in dialectical materialism, in its pathos, in its critique, in its ethos, and in its

creative will. It can also show that the open admission and the conscious thinking out of these elements are just as necessary for the truth and effectiveness of dialectical materialism as they are for overcoming the mythical elements in Christian theology.

The Attack in the Religious Sphere

The development of our discussion from the relatively superficial to deeper levels has driven us forward from the political to the psychological, from the psychological to the philosophical, and from the philosophical to the religious realm. The attack of dialectical materialism upon Christianity finally proves itself to be a religious attack. As has been pointed out before, "religious" does not mean the affirmation of transcendent objects, but the experience of the transcendent meaning of our existence and the expression of this meaning in symbols and actions. A religious attack upon Christianity means therefore : the opposing of another ultimate experience of meaning to the Christian one, and consequently the rejection of the symbols and actions in which Christianity expresses its experience.

Such an attack is undertaken by dialectical materialism in the name of a "social heroism". This "social heroism" may be called the only equivalent adversary of Christianity which exists today. It combines two elements. It is heroism not for the sake of the individual, but rather for the sake of social justice. As heroism it has its roots in stoic philosophy, but as social heroism it grows out of Old Testament prophecy. Social heroism looks upon social happiness, that is, the happiness of the many, as the aim of human action. For the realization of this aim, however, it depends on a commitment which in certain circumstances implies the complete sacrificing of individual happiness, and which excludes in every case the consolation of other-worldly satisfactions. It opposes therefore the search for a salvation which takes individuals out of social reality. And it opposes equally the transcendent idea of deliverance, the ascetic attempts to arrive at an elevation above life, the interest in one's own soul, the hope of immortal-

ity, and also the humanistic idea of self-education. Happiness, which presupposes a certain degree of material satisfaction, should be sought, but always in connection with the claim to happiness of the masses, and on the condition that it may be necessary to sacrifice one's own happiness and life. That this attitude is not merely theory can be seen from the long and constantly growing history of Socialist and Communist martyrdom.

Christianity cannot answer that this attitude is " nihilistic " because there is no hope in it. For heroism does not even become nihilism when it gives up the realization of its hope. One cannot overcome the religious attitude of social heroism with a mythology based on immortality or re-incarnation. For dialectical materialism contains too many Christian elements in itself and too much faith, faith in the sacrificial struggle for the happiness of the many and of the coming generations, for this attack to be effective. It is also wrong to say that this attitude is merely ethical and not religious. Apart from the fact that this separation is never possible, social heroism implies a relationship to a total meaning of existence, and is therefore religious. Nor is it possible to reject social heroism as eudaemonistic. It is the seeking of happiness, but for others rather than one's self. It seeks happiness for the individual only in so far as he belongs to the social unit and in so far as in the struggle for the happiness of others he is not obliged to sacrifice his own happiness.

Christian theology, in defending itself against social heroism and in attacking it, can only say this : the conception of happiness is not independent if it does not contain a supra-temporal (not post-temporal) element which can be realized individually in situations of complete social despair. Social justice is incomplete and mechanistic when love does not give it life and creative power. Heroism deceives itself if it does not see that in its devotion to the future which it does not experience, it contains a supra-temporal element, and that it is precisely this element which gives to heroism its dignity and its power of giving meaning to life. Finally, Christian theology has to say that without such a supra-

temporal element, social heroism is condemned to swing back and forth between utopianism and resignation, and that therefore it can only find its truth in combination with Christian truth.

But when Christian theology speaks thus, it must realize that ultimate decisions are not affected by apologetics, and that the unity of Christianity and dialectical materialism can be created only by a unity of common experience, perhaps only by common martyrdom.

The Anti-Christian Forces in Germany

ARTHUR FREY

If we speak or write about the anti-Christian forces in Germany, we must always begin with the fact that these are no new phenomena. They must not be laid to the blame of National Socialism, nor are they indebted to it. On the other hand, something has become different with the victory of the National Socialist Movement : the religious movements, which earlier came on the scene as " Christian " restoration movements, have come out into the open as anti-Christian movements and anti-Christian religious societies.

This development shows itself very clearly in one of the most successful popular writers, Gustav Frenssen. He was a minister and wrote a great number of books which passed through an extraordinarily large number of editions. There are few who have not read his *Jörn Uhl* (1901, edition of 315.000), *Hilligenlei* (1905, edition of 200.000), or his *Village Sermons* (1899-1902, 89-97.000). The fact that these books, of which we must say that their philosophical content is indeed religious but certainly not Christian, could have such a wide circulation, helps us to understand how far large sections of the German nation were estranged from Christianity, even at the beginning of this century, and how they were ready to receive a new faith. It probably meant an inner deliverance for Gustav Frenssen when in 1936, in his book *Der Glaube der Nordmark*, he dared to break with every form of Christianity and professed a German faith rooted in German racial characteristics. He characterizes the situation as it existed for ten years in many parts of Germany — and not only there — when he writes : " One preached, at all events in the Churches of my home, the Nordmark, anything ranging from Luther to Goethe, who was a religious man although most people do not recognize him as such ; anything ranging from the Augsburg Confession to Nietzsche, who also was a religious

man. Since this was the situation of the Church, I did not consider it, in the heavy fog of low Saxony which lay over my whole youth, as a peculiar institution and as a foreign body in the German life and the German nation, but as a concern of the whole nation. I believe that, though many individual clergymen acted oddly, the Church remained for the majority of people, as for me, the means of interpreting, in careful and respectful words, to the nation as a whole, the miracle of creation, of life, and of death ; and this not in order that they might become serious people, for they were that by nature, but in order that they might understand why they should be serious . . . Thus I have, during my whole period in the Church, never said a single word against my conscience. I have been a preacher in the sense that Herder and Möricke were ; as little an orthodox or even a dogmatist and churchman as they, but simply an earnest and pious man of low-Saxon blood. The Church which I served, already decaying in itself, already without the inner force to compel men's spirits to observe its teaching more closely, yes, without even the will to do so, allowed me and other clergymen to be pious in our own way and to present our own piety . . . As it happened to Shakespeare, Lessing, Herder, Kant and Goethe, that although they were born pagans with German souls and pagan attitudes, yet they never became entirely free from the Christian teaching of their whole youth, so it was with me and my contemporaries. Our faith was a mixture of low Saxon and Christian elements . . . I doubt whether the generation which is now growing up can even become fully free in its faith. It is likely that only the next generation, for which the State will create the possibility of growing up apart from foreign religious influences, and therefore undistorted, will find that which is the original faith of Germanic men, and that which would be able to give its unity of spirit to the German people ”.

It is, of course, not true that all those who ten or twenty years ago took a stand similar to that of Gustav Frenssen, have carried through the development to a racial, national religion. There is a middle group who go on seeking that which once Frenssen also sought, and who try to bring

Christianity into relation to, or into accordance with, "the newly recognized national values". It is the mark of the "German Christians" that they — to use Gustav Frenssen's expression — hold on to a "mixture" of German and Christian elements. But in view of the purpose of this article, we shall not deal more fully with this group, but confine ourselves to the neo-pagan movements. It should, however, be noted that the German Christian groups will without doubt end up in a purely pagan national religion. It has already become clear that the so-called moderate wing of the German Christians is in process of dissolution, and that, on the other hand, the *National Church Movement* of German Christians in Thuringia is definitely growing. This is, however, a movement which, according to the unanimous judgment of all the Churches in the world, can no longer claim to be a Christian Church.

The "German Vision of God"

The most significant creative effort in the realm of German national religion is certainly that of Professor Wilhelm Hauer in Tübingen. In his *The German Vision of God* he says that every nation has its own god and its own conception of god. He rejects explicitly every synthesis and every combination between Christianity and the German vision of god. What he proposes is therefore no longer the Germanizing of Christianity, such as Paul de Lagarde demanded in his *Deutschen Schriften*, or Arthur Bonus in his *Zur Religiösen Krisis der Gegenwart*. We shall attempt to explain briefly the nature of this racial faith as we find it in most of the neo-pagan religious societies of Germany.

The birthplace of the German vision of god is the German soul of which god has taken hold. The fundamental notions are those of the soul and the heart. Who would not think in this connection of the German philosophers Hegel and Fichte, of the theologians Herder and Schleiermacher, or of the pantheism of a Goethe? In fact, the mysticism and pantheism of German idealism have prepared the way for the

German vision of god. But the latter in its radicalism wants to go beyond the conceptions of the nineteenth century, and create a wholly new epoch. "It has become clear that the dominion of Christianity as a normative power in Germanic territory, viewed in the perspective of the whole historical development, was nothing but an episode of a thousand years which now comes to an end."

In this German faith, *faith* means the life, strength and security of the innermost being. It is confidence in the power which resides in the heart, where the creative god unites himself with those who are sincere and prepared for sacrifice. It is, however, also tranquillity in the storm, perseverance in defeat, and hope where every hope seems defeated. "Beyond all our questioning and doubting, it arises again and again victoriously from the creative foundations of our soul as a wonderful gift of the eternally creative reality of god." To German faith the *blood* is sacred, for in it streams the productive secret of families, of tribes and nations since ancient days. The heart of the nation is kinship through blood. In faithfulness to the tribal blood the will of the gods is fulfilled. This is the basis for the claim that the *race* must remain pure. It is of the greatest significance for a people which racial image it considers authoritative. But in order to have a nation, one must not only have race, but also the *soil* upon which it has developed itself. The soil is the sacred place in which god meets it as he does nowhere else. "And because the earth is sacred to us, therefore we not only love it with a warm affection, but we feel ourselves respectfully responsible for the gifts which it gives to us. The bread of the soil, the waters which refresh us, the earthly love, the embraces of body and soul, the mother and the child which feeds upon her strength, the power which makes us go on, the fighting courage which makes us jubilant when it is necessary to risk our lives : these are our sacraments, the sacraments of the earth, which are more real to us than all others."

For this German religion based on faith and blood, race and soil, Hauer has already produced a liturgy in which he tries to show how the festivals of the German faith should be celebrated, for instance the "consecration of the name", the

"consecration of youth", the "consecration of marriage" and the "consecration of death". It must, however, be said that this German faith, to which Professor Hauer and Count Reventlow try to convert the German nation, has so far not met with the response which its founders and leaders had expected for it. It should also be stated that these two leaders have proved themselves chivalrous opponents of Christianity, who have tried to keep the conflict with the Christian faith upon a spiritual plane and have therefore rejected the use of political means of force and compulsion in their struggle against Christianity. The creators of the German vision of god have, however, discovered that movements which desire to use only spiritual weapons are increasingly losing their supporters.

The influence and significance of the different denominations of the German vision of god have decreased even more. This is specially true of the *Nordic Faith Movement*, which stands for the aristocratic element in the new faith; but it is also true of the *Germanic Communion of Faith*, which demands of its members: 1. Faith in the Germanic blood; 2. Faith in the Germanic religion; 3. The cutting away from all other religious communions. The *German Religious Communion*, which could celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary two years ago, does not make any progress either. And the stubborn Arthur Dinter who was once a companion of arms of Adolf Hitler, but who was later excluded from the National Socialist party and became the founder of the *German People's Church* and the author of a series of popular books which ran into large editions, has to report that his movement is passing through a very difficult time. It is also probable that since General Ludendorff, who became the patron of the wildest form of enmity against Christianity, has died, the influence of Mathilde Ludendorff and her periodical *Am Heiligen Quell Deutscher Kraft* will decrease. Mathilde Ludendorff, who complains most bitterly against Christianity, has never yet been able to prove that in the grave spiritual conflict in which Germany finds itself today she has any positive contribution to give.

The " Myth of the Twentieth Century "

Does this mean that the enemies of Christianity are already retreating, or that their movements are in process of dissolution ? Such an optimistic conclusion would be completely unrealistic. What is happening more and more is clearly expressed by Herbert Graber who once belonged to the group of Hauer, but who has left the *German Faith Movement*. He defines his reasons for this step as follows : " For us, as for innumerable Germans, National Socialism is the new faith which makes every confession or philosophical grouping superfluous . . . Those who do not yet recognize that the new faith of our people expresses itself today powerfully and decisively in National Socialism, which fills the lives of millions of German men and enables them to commit themselves completely ; those who still have their own peculiar religious or confessional concerns for the sake of their own souls or for the sake of others ; such men may continue to take care of their own souls, but they will live apart from the faith and the creative activity of their nation ".

It is indeed true that the faith in the renewal of the people, the faith in the German nation, the faith in the national honour which have become the tenets of the National Socialist revolution satisfy the religious needs of large circles. It is a national myth, " the myth of the twentieth century ", as it has been explained to us by Alfred Rosenberg. During the Great War German blood was shed for the national renewal, and the heroes who fell during that War have created a new Germany by their sacrifice. Thus Bergmann speaks of this renewal with the greatest enthusiasm : " The truth is that their (the warriors') death became our living will . . . Every single one of them deserves that for their sake we should know no more than one religion, the German religion, and the German Church which is built on the rock of the truth of our national suffering. We alone can make these dead ones immortal by not letting the price for which they gave their life, namely, the honour and greatness of our nation, disappear, but by holding on to it and increasing it. That can, however, only happen when our national

consciousness takes the form of religion, and when our will not to deceive the dead and their sacred action takes the form of building a church". The national consciousness is the religion of the National Socialist people, and the national honour the central concept of the myth of the twentieth century. Alfred Rosenberg says clearly that in the National Socialist conception of life it is not love but honour which stands at the centre. The national honour does not accept any equally powerful centre besides itself, neither "Christian love, nor the Freemason idea of humanity, nor Roman philosophy".

Rosenberg does not give us a clear picture of the particular form which a German National Church would take, or what are the precise contents of the myth of the twentieth century. According to him it has to be left to a future genius to select and to combine organically those precious stones of the German spirit which are to be found in the spiritual heritage of thousands of years, but which have so far not been given the place which they deserve.

The Attack on Christianity

It is precisely because this national myth has not been more clearly defined that for a long time it was not taken sufficiently seriously in Christian circles, but was simply considered as one element of the national consciousness. It seemed as if the National Socialist conception of life and the Christian faith could be harmonized. This confidence was all the greater since the *Führer*, in his book *My Struggle*, wrote in a friendly way of the Christian Churches, and repeated these statements in the *Reichstag*. Moreover, the programme of the party proclaimed that it stood on the foundation of "positive Christianity". But those who studied the situation more carefully, not excepting the speeches of the *Führer*, came to see that Adolf Hitler is just as convinced as is Alfred Rosenberg that the Christian era, which has lasted in the West for a thousand years, is over, and that in its place has to come a new era, namely, the era of National Socialism. The proclamation of an empire which will last a thousand

years, which Adolf Hitler made at the Second Party Congress at Nürnberg, was not so much a political as a philosophical statement. Adolf Hitler is not only the highest political authority in the *Third Reich*; he is at the same time the messiah of the German race.

In the short period of five years National Socialism has had remarkable success in the philosophical realm. The principle facts are the following : the philosophical education of the party is entrusted to Alfred Rosenberg, the author of *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*. The Hitler youth, which now embraces the whole of the German youth, is led by Baldur von Schirach, who has coined the well known expression : " I am neither Protestant nor Catholic, I believe only in Germany ". In the castles which serve as centre for training in leadership, the future regional leaders of the party are educated and the teachers are selected by Alfred Rosenberg. It is therefore natural that in these castles the number of those who have left the Church is very considerable. Religious education in the Christian sense has increasingly to give way to the new philosophical education. Thus in the year 1937 in Württemberg alone eight hundred pastors have been excluded from giving religious education in the schools. The consistent and intensive struggle which National Socialism conducts against the confessional schools, and that not always with fair means, is also a heavy blow for the Christian education of youth. Especially in Southern Germany the State has largely succeeded in realizing its aims in this connection. We cannot discuss further details, however interesting they may be, but we must conclude that the State has been able to withdraw youth to a very large extent from the Church and from the Christian family by organizing them in the Hitler youth, and to estrange them from the Christian faith by a philosophical education in the spirit of the myth of the twentieth century. The decisive influence in youth education is no longer that of the family, and even less that of the Church, but rather that of the State. The words which the *Führer* spoke on May 1, 1937, are specially revealing : " There are old simpletons with whom one can do nothing at all. But we take the children away from them ; and these we

educate into new German men. When the kids are ten years old we take hold of them and form them into a community. And when they are eighteen, we still do not let them go. For then they come into the S.A. or the Labour Front, and afterwards we send them to the Work Service, and for two years to the Army ". In the education of youth the *Third Reich* thus takes an attitude very similar to that which Soviet Russia has taken for a number of years.

The Church Conflict

The State does not content itself with increasing limitation of the sphere of influence of the Church and the increasing exclusion of the Church from the education of youth, but it does not even hesitate to take a hand in the affairs of the Church itself. Laws and decrees of which the State gives a one-sided and arbitrary interpretation have been issued against the abuse of the pulpit, against the announcement of the names of those who have left the Church, against the taking of free collections, etc. Here it becomes especially clear that the totalitarian State does not recognize any sphere as being outside its proper sphere of sovereignty, but takes all realms of life under its wings and desires to subordinate all institutions to itself. But a Church which knows that it has to fulfil a divine calling, namely, to proclaim the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, knows also that it can only serve the one Lord, and that it cannot recognize the primacy of a State in the Church without becoming unfaithful to its own mission. In the year 1937 alone eight hundred and six persons, most of them clergymen, have suffered imprisonment for the sake of the freedom of the Church. The strongest attack of the State has been directed against Martin Niemöller, the courageous pastor of Berlin-Dahlem, who was only brought before his judges after seven months of continuous imprisonment and who was then condemned to seven months of imprisonment (cancelled by the period already spent in prison) and to a fine. Surely no dishonouring punishment ! But Martin Niemöller, who ought to have been liberated after this legal judgment, was again arrested by the secret police and brought to a

concentration camp. The State does not pay any heed to the legal judgment. That is a most distressing fact, for it forces us to the conclusion that the *Third Reich* is increasingly, and with less and less concern, leaving the foundations of a State based upon law. But where law has to give way to arbitrariness, religion and culture are equally in danger.

The struggle which has broken out between State and Church in Germany will probably not come to an end very soon; for we know from Church history and general history how long such conflicts generally last. And it is indubitable that a national religion, such as we find in the myth of the twentieth century, will make further progress in Germany. The national god holds the spirits of the party in bondage. Until a short time ago, the party was to some extent restrained by the Foreign Office and the Army. It is, however, to be feared that this influence disappeared on February 4, 1938. And it is furthermore to be feared that the rude and unjust words which Adolf Hitler spoke on February 20, 1938, in the *Reichstag* will be considered as giving permission for any further action against the Confessional Church. He said: "In such a time of emergency, those do not act in the name of God who in their idleness dally about the country with Bible quotations, but those who give to their prayer the highest form which unites man with God, namely, the form of work". But the Confessional Church which fights its fight courageously and proclaims its Lord Jesus Christ before the party and the State, knows that it is supported by the promise of this Lord to Whom all dominion is given, both in heaven and on earth.

“Life. Life. Eternal Life.”¹

BROTHER GEORGE EVERY

If we want a clue to the distinctive character of the age of prose which comes between the theological battles of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation and the scientific and political battles of the nineteenth century, we shall probably find it in the English common-sense philosopher John Locke. And if we want the same kind of clue to the thought and art and morality of the nineteenth century we shall find it in the end, I think, in Kant. We shall see that Kant's sharp distinction between speculative and practical reason, his denial of what had been metaphysics, and his assertion of the autonomy of morality, underlie theologies and even artistic movements whose authors had small respect for Kant. Newman, Dean Mansel, and other assailants of “Germanism” in England agreed with the sage of Königsberg that the witness for God and morality in and to the soul must be utterly independent of the witness of the senses to an order of phenomena to all seeming mechanical, determined, and dead. And for the poets' party Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater made a similar schism between aesthetic fictions and scientific truths.

Our clue to the twentieth century will be found I believe somewhere in the neighbourhood of the writings of Professor Bergson. Whether we read him or not (and I do not think I have ever read a book of his to the end) he lies around us everywhere. He crops up in all kinds of unexpected places, in science, in philosophy, in literature, in art, in politics, in theology. Even when we are utterly anti-Bergsonian he has influenced the way in which we put our case, as Kant influenced Newman and Mansel. Dialectical materialists, Spenglerians, Fascists, traditionalists, all are thinking in

¹ From a *Happy New Year*, a poem by W. H. Auden in *New Country* a Hogarth anthology (1933).

terms of a developing life which from time to time projects new thought-forms through which we must think, and rejects old ones which are no longer possible. And this idea of the “time-spirit” casting out the devils of liberalism and materialism and ushering in a new religious age, even haunts the writings of some who believe most fervently in an immutable revelation, and oppose most absolutely 33 to 1933.

Locke and the eighteenth century believed that natural religion was sound, healthful, and immutable. The Biblical revelation was either “a republication of natural religion”, or “a device of superstition and priestcraft”. Kant and Comte and nineteenth century philosophers in general were not quite so crude. They recognized in theology and metaphysics rudimentary attempts to order human experience. But they certainly believed that those attempts had been definitely and permanently superseded by modern philosophy and modern positive science. Outside a limited moral sphere religion was wrong, and science was right. And one at least of the most distinguished religious thinkers of the time sought to comfort mankind with the possibility that the sensible world might be “a Divine economy suited to our need”¹.

Bergson and the twentieth century take over from the nineteenth the idea that the history of human thought is the history of a series of guesses and glimpses, gaining in subtlety and elasticity until modern times. But where the nineteenth century was certain of the infinite superiority, the finality, of its own understanding of the physical universe, the twentieth century cries halt. We know, as the men of the Renaissance did not know, how many civilizations there have been, how many ways of feeling and perceiving the totality of things; but no one of them, certainly not mechanical materialism, seems to us any more valid and absolute and final than any other. There are only changes in thought to suit our economic and cultural and biological development and differentiation.

¹ Newman, *University Sermons*, p. 350.

When Bergson first became popular this prospect could be the occasion of a kind of hope that we might escape from the aridity of mechanism without ceasing to be scientific and civilized. Bergson gave us Bernard Shaw, denouncing medical superstitions, ready to see in religion "the fountain of inspiration which is continually flowing in the universe . . . the promptings of virtue and the revulsions of shame . . . aspiration and conscience, both of which forces are matters of fact more obvious than electro-magnetism . . . in terms of the celestial vision"¹. And he gave us H. G. Wells and his Invisible King, "God, who fights through men against Blind force and Night and Non-Existence, who is the end, who is the meaning. He is the only King"². For in Bergson's own view "Mankind lies groaning, half-crushed beneath the weight of its own progress. Men do not sufficiently realize that the future is in their own hands. Theirs is the task of determining first of all whether they want to go on living or not. Theirs the responsibility, then, for deciding if they want merely to live, or intend to make just the extra effort required for fulfilling, even on their refractory planet, the essential function of the universe, which is a machine for the making of gods"³.

"For the making of gods", of finite gods, of "gods who have not made the heaven and the earth". We do not now look forward to the worship of an *élan vital* revealed by biology, Bergsonian philosophy, mysticism, and psychical research. The chance for a comparatively civilized worship of something between the Stoic *Anima Mundi* and the Christian God [the Holy Ghost] was lost with the failure of the greatest of all Bergsonian religious movements, the Modernist movement in France and Italy. In M. Bergson's early days there did seem to be a chance that a peaceful revolution would open the gates of the Roman Catholic Church to all who believed in a divine power working in and through nature and man, and valued a tradition in which all the spirituality of the world

¹ In the preface to *St. Joan*.

² In *Mr. Brilling sees it through*.

³ *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, in the English translation, the last paragraph.

might seem to coalesce. But that kind of constitutional change does not happen.

The Search for a Modern Paganism

Even in those days W. B. Yeats in Ireland and D. H. Lawrence in England were lifting up their voices not only against mechanism, but against the machine, and murmuring that it was not the materialistic view of life only, but mechanical civilization that was crushing the spirit. Both hoped for a *débâcle* to destroy science and the machine, that their white minds might be delivered from the obsession of a rational and ordered world, conceived by Plato and hardened by Christendom, and might follow their dark hearts in an ecstasy of worship of the dark gods, the pagan powers that must return.

In 1913 this was a romantic and decadent cult, like an addiction to absinthe or nitrous oxide, and received the simultaneous and unanimous denunciation of scientists and theologians. But in the 1930's a great European nation has set itself to do what Lawrence conceived in 1922 and 1927 that Australia or Mexico might do. It has dismissed scientific education, philosophy, the intellectuals, and the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, to return to a pre-Christian cult. All those who are interested in the universal aspects of the German Faith Movement ought to read *Kangaroo* and *The Plumed Serpent*, especially some of Don Ramon's songs :

“ Jesu, the Son of God, bids you farewell.
Mary, the Mother of God, bids you farewell.
For the last time they bless you, as they leave you.
Answer *Adios* !
Say *Adios* ! my children.”¹

“ Between your breast and belly is a star.
If it be not there
You are empty gourd shells filled with dust and wind.
When you walk, the star walks with you, between your
breast and your belly.

¹ D. H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 301.

When you sleep, it softly shines,
 When you speak true and true, it is bright on your lips
 and your teeth.
 When you lift your hands in courage and bravery, its
 glow is clear in your palms.
 When you turn to your wives as brave men turn to their
 women
 The Morning Star and the Evening Star shine together.
 For man is the Morning Star
 And woman is the Star of Evening.
 I tell you, you are not men alone.
 The star of the beyond is within you.
 But have you seen a dead man, how his star has gone out
 of him ?
 So the star will go out of you, even as a woman will leave
 a man if his warmth never warms her.
 Should you say ; *I have no star ; I am no star.*
 So it will leave you, and you will hang like a gourd on
 the vine of life
 With nothing but rind."¹

The prophecy in Yeats' *The Second Coming* was less exact but more detached and objective :

" The Second Coming ! Hardly are those words out
 When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
 Troubles my sight : somewhere in sands of the desert
 A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
 A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
 Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
 The darkness drops again ; but now I know
 That twenty centuries of stony sleep
 Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
 Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born ? "

Yeats sees a religious age coming, and he does not regret
 it. He knows that man cannot live in health without belief

¹ D. H. Lawrence *op. cit.* pp. 363-4.

in some gods. But he cannot believe without self-deception, and he cannot deceive himself. He would agree with Mr. Aldous Huxley that “ Whatever else they may be — and many theological and psychological theories have been elaborated to explain their nature — religious rites, prayer and meditation are devices for affecting the sources of the will. It is a matter of empirical experience that regular meditation on, say, courage or peace often helps the meditator to be brave and serene. Prayer for moral strength and tenacity of purpose is in fact quite often answered ”¹. But Yeats would probably also agree with Mr. D. G. James that the trick will not work unless you really believe in it. From this point of view “ Religion is seen as an artistic mode of apprehension which is compelled to assert the reality of its mythos. It is therefore, when thus viewed, seen as containing an inner contradiction, yet a contradiction which, for the preservation of religion, must be preserved at all costs ”².

This fear prevents people like Aldous Huxley and Gerald Heard, and even Allen Tate, the author of *Reactionary Essays*³, from committing themselves to any single faith. They fear that all faiths may be projections of the same psychological and biological needs. Their children may accept one, but they will not.

As this fear becomes more and more widely diffused, it diffuses itself into the Church, but to the Church's destruction. “ The greatest danger to religion is not from critics outside the Church, but from those within organized Christianity who are constantly urging the recognition of all miracle as either explicable or as poetry.”⁴ The Church appears to the wistful today as the very symbol of a tradition built up out of elemental human needs. But because she satisfied the needs of the decaying Roman Empire, she failed the Renaissance and she fails our mechanical and disillusioned world. The Church is criticized, where thirty years ago she was ignored.

¹ Aldous Huxley, *What are you going to do about it ?* (a pacifist pamphlet) Chatto and Windus, 1936.

² D. G. James, *Scepticism and Poetry*, Allen and Unwin, London, p. 256.

³ Published by Scribners in London and New York. See especially his remarks on “ the religion of the half-horse ” in *Religion and the Old South*.

⁴ D. G. James, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

But those who are most perplexed about her cannot ask whether Christianity is true. They ask if the Church is alive, and they are answered in that apologetic, reasonable tone which is associated in their minds with Liberalism. In "the struggle of our time to concentrate, not to dissipate; to renew our association with traditional wisdom; to re-establish a vital connexion between the individual and the race"¹, rational apologetic can do very little to help us.

Christianity is inevitable

Yet no one, not even Lawrence or Yeats, can think out a new religion except in terms of the old, and to contrast the religious attitude as such with the humanist one, as T. E. Hulme did in his *Speculations*, in itself involves a recognition that Christian dogma is central to the religious problem the world over. For if, as Hulme maintained, at the heart of all religious ages lies something like the doctrine of Original Sin, "that man is in no sense perfect, but a wretched creature, who can yet apprehend perfection"², then all the sacrificial rites are types and shadows of the great sacrifice of "The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world". Our real pain is that we are without priest or ephod or teraphim.

"Faun's flesh is not to us,
Nor the saint's vision,
We have the Press for wafer;
Franchise for circumcision."³

"I do not find
The Hanged Man, Fear death by water.
I see crowds of people, walking round in a ring."⁴

But our Hanged Man, our corn-maiden, who is not found,
can only be Christ, and his shrines are with us still :

¹ T. S. Eliot, *After Strange Gods*, p. 48.

² *Speculations* of T. E. Hulme, edited by Herbert Read, p. 70.

³ *Hugh Selwyn Mamberley*, by Ezra Pound.

⁴ From *The Waste Land*, by T. S. Eliot.

"There is the empty chapel, only the wind's home.
It has no windows, and the door swings,
Dry bones can harm no one."¹

Only that chapel stands, not utterly deserted on a lonely
hill, but

"Where fishmen lounge at noon : where the walls
Of Magnus Martyr hold
Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold."²

The Waste Land was and is a summons to those who want a new or a syncretic religion to explore the Christian Church. And since T. S. Eliot passed over the waste into the Church of England, it has become less and less possible for a modern English or American poet or novelist to neglect Christianity as altogether impossible of belief. Yet there has been no general return to the Church. Even Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom, the two Virginian poets who denounce everything that an orthodox Christian would denounce in the religious and secular atmosphere of the United States, linger upon the Church's doorstep because they cannot hold the mythical belief which they think necessary to psychological salvation. Paul Elmer More only came in at the very end of his life. It is not that they or any of their contemporaries really hold that any other religious belief is possible after Christianity. The Oriental mysteries, the resuscitated gods of Eire and the Eddas, the psychological urges of Jung and Gerald Heard, and dialectical materialism, are stimuli to action, but not beliefs. If they have an effect on the personality similar to the effect of beliefs, it is not the same effect. They drown reason in imagination, and in the end drown imagination. Belief would justify the imaginative vision at the bar of reason and give the reason an object which would satisfy the imagination's hunger. No mythology, no practice of meditation, no philosophy of politics can do this. And Christianity cannot do it if it is adopted only

¹ From *The Waste Land*, by T. S. Eliot.

² *Ibid.*

for reasons of sentiment, or mere tradition, or political or psycho-therapeutic expediency. To be of any use Christianity must first be believed. But if it can be believed it will be believed.

If there is one thing which the twentieth century knows better than the nineteenth it is the difference between a belief that gives consistency to the whole of life and an intellectual opinion or a political or mystical preference for one attitude to life rather than another. The question at issue is not whether any number of professing Christians have lively faith, for it is no new thing for the love of many to wax cold. The question is whether faith can still colour the lives not only of those who may prefer to be Christians, like Mauriac or Claudel or T. S. Eliot or Michael Roberts, but also of those who rebel and fight against faith and the Church, as Baudelaire and James Joyce and Wystan Auden and D. H. Lawrence.

Blasphemy is better than Indifference

There lies the significance of the return of blasphemy in literature. Those who today have been brought up as Christians but "lose their faith", no longer find an alternative frame of reference. They are no longer able to believe in something else which is on their side against Christianity. Therefore they remain in a condition of suspense where they become a prey to fantasies which may or may not be explicitly recognized as such. Where there is a confusion between fantasy and science, as in D. H. Lawrence's *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, the conditions are present which give rise, not to a new religion or a new Christian heresy, but to a violent and grotesque distortion of Christian dogma. At least this seems to me to be the nature of the fantasy behind Lawrence's last group of writings, *The Plumed Serpent*, *Apocalypse*, *The Man who Died*, and *The Woman who rode away*. German readers will be aware of more influential parallels.

Such distortions of a Christian frame of reference as we find in the work of W. H. Auden seem to me to be far less sinister, because they betray themselves at every point and indicate suspense rather than bitterness.

His Buddhist-Christian chorus of lama-monks sings :

“ True, Love finally is great,
Greater than all; but large the hate,
Far larger than Man can ever estimate.”

“ But between the day and night
The choice is free to all, and light
Falls equally on black and white.”¹

What blasphemy there is in his work is more of the nature of the orthodox blasphemy of Baudelaire and James Joyce, who are as Christian as Villon and Rabelais. The veils are passing. The apostates can no longer be heretical, and even though they search through the Buddhist books for another religion they will find only the shadow of their own. They find their own way back, almost unaided, to fishers of men who have toiled all night and taken nothing. The shoal is under the sea.

¹ *The Ascent of F6*, by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, Faber.

Bourgeois Totalitarianism

DENIS DE ROUGEMONT

It seems to me that there is some injustice in the far too easy criticisms which the Western democracies, to use Hitler's own phrase, are never weary of making about Fascist Governments and their fellow enemy Stalinism. This is what I mean : it is somewhat unjust to reproach our neighbours for having realized completely, and with a passion often brutal in its results, something that we ourselves are incapable of realizing in our own countries. It is not that we do not secretly desire to realize it, but material circumstances have not yet forced us to become thoroughly aware both of our real ambitions and also of our real situation.

Is Liberalism truly liberal ?

To contrast our "liberalism" with the "totalitarianism" of our neighbours is in many respects like contrasting diffidence or even hypocrisy with the most brutal frankness. We say : they subordinate everything to the strength of their state. Culture, individual liberty, freedom of the press and of religious societies, all are "brought into line" (*Gleichschaltung*) and may only be used to increase the war potential of the State. Certainly this is very clear and very striking in Germany and in Italy. Does that mean that in our democracies it does not already exist ? And does not the fact that it is almost unnoticed and unrecognized in our lives very often only make it the more serious ?

To quote a few typical facts.

In theory our culture is "liberal". But in practice is it not subjected to State control ? There are syllabuses of work, examinations, State diplomas, competition for official

posts. These are only so many ways of putting us under discipline, of "bringing us into line" from childhood, of regimentation from within of the free individuals that we think ourselves to be. If the process has become familiar, and gradually unnoticed, that does not in any way mean that it is not real. And if it is disguised, softened and adapted, it is not always to the advantage of our moral independence. We have lost bit by bit all sensitiveness to State tyranny. We no longer dare to protest frankly against accepted opinion, against what so-called "free" opinion accepts as being "free". And one fine day a professor is dismissed because he defends Communist ideas. This happened quite recently in French Switzerland. It puts the question quite clearly : is the "liberalism" of our democracies anything but the spontaneous conformity of our thought to the limitations of bourgeois society ? Is it anything but a *Gleichschaltung* so successful that under normal conditions all external appearances of constraint can be abolished ? Who knows whether, in twenty years time perhaps, when National Socialism has penetrated to the very bones of young Germans, the Hitlerian State, certain that no serious opposition will again be shown, will not appear to be "liberal" ? Is bourgeois "liberalism" in fact anything but a totalitarianism grown old and familiar ?

The case of conscientious objectors moreover seems to prove it. Liberal theorists all agree in affirming that "the rights of the individual precede the rights of the State", and that "all opinions are to be respected provided that they are sincere". But this toleration exists in fact only on one condition : that is that these individual rights remain fictitious, and that these opinions remain divorced from all action. The moment that a free opinion passes into concrete action the State intervenes in the totalitarian manner — except that it does it a little more politely. It then becomes evident that liberalism was a hoax : it was only freedom to think no matter what, provided that one acted like everybody else ; in other words, provided that one accepted the unconscious subordination of the individual to the interests of the State.

"No Persecution is the worst Persecution"

The next question is whether what shocks the "liberalists" and the "democrats" is really *Gleichschaltung* in itself, or only the brutality with which it is clothed in Fascist countries. Are the Western democracies really the implacable opponents of a *Gleichschaltung* which is a little more wise and adaptable, less harsh, less opposed to bourgeois customs, in short "accepted freely", that is to say, accepted unconsciously?

I do not think so. And I think that this is a very serious matter, especially for our Christian Churches.

In opposition to many bourgeois liberals, I think that brutality is less dangerous for the spirit than "conditioned" somnolence¹ — if I may so describe it. We have seen during these last years a far-reaching revival in the German Churches. Can we say the same of our own?

Do we believe that the modern State, born of war, justified by war, increasing its power in proportion as real or fictitious threats of war increase; do we seriously believe that such a State can ever really tolerate a Church that is really Christian? Is it not clear that its toleration is proportionate on the one hand to its relative weakness, on the other hand to the compromises of which the Churches are guilty? If the State became stronger and the Churches more Christian, toleration would immediately give place to persecution.

In the Old Testament catastrophies are the means used by God to awaken His people, but also to harden the heart of Pharaoh. It is clear that the war of 1914 has hardened the hearts of our Pharaohs — of all our States. But will God's people understand? Will they understand, while there is yet time, that Pharaoh, even when he is polite and tolerant, has never ceased to require everything, to exact everything

¹ *Translator's Note.* We translate the French expression *somnolence dirigée* by "conditioned somnolence". Readers of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* will remember how the inhabitants were "conditioned" to unthinking acceptance of the existing social order and their own place in it by means of loudspeakers whispering "dope" to them while they slept.

from each citizen ? And that he is only too pleased with our somnolence, our unconscious willingness to give in to his demands ?

*
* *

The totalitarian State is strong just in proportion as we are weak, yielding, resigned to defeat, or blind in the face of danger. It is the exact sum of our individual weaknesses. Do not let us think that in history there are certain calamities which we little individuals cannot avert. For just in so far as we believe this, these calamities exist. I have said elsewhere, and I shall never weary of repeating like a *delenda Carthago* : " Where man is wholly man, the State will never be totalitarian ".

The whole man is he who embraces with all his strength the vocation to which God calls him. He only will never let himself be regimented.

An International Dialogue on the Defence of Christianity

PIERRE MAURY

This dialogue represents a discussion in an international group such as the World's Student Christian Federation brings together in its Conferences. Its purpose is not to assert a particular conviction nor to arrive at definite conclusions, but rather to give a concrete picture of some spiritual and intellectual tendencies which we find in the Federation today. The writer of this article has not attempted to have the discussion conform to a plan; on the contrary, he has tried to retain the element of irregularity and the constant re-discussion of points characteristic of a typical conversation of this kind. It goes without saying that the persons who participate in the discussion are not supposed to express the full content of the tendencies which they represent and that they are not absolutely typical of a race, a nationality or a Church.

The Englishman: Today we are not going to discuss theology. Nor are we going to tackle a piece of the Bible as is the fashion in the Federation today: a very good fashion, let me hasten to add! We have to examine a practical subject. It is one that touches us all very closely. Indeed in every country in the world it has become a burning question, and every day we are being asked to make our position clear with regard to it. Our subject is: What ought the Church, or the Federation, or even a Christian to do in face of the adversaries of Christianity? Must we fight them, and if so, how can we fight them in a way which is both Christian and effective?

We are very pleased to have with us today two Continentals who hold different opinions. This famous Continental Theology always seems rather mysterious to us, so it is especially interesting for us, once in a way, to see that it does not prevent Christians, even in the same country, from holding very different positions and opinions. And then it is

obvious that on the Continent of Europe the problem arises today in the most burning and striking form.

I must warn you of one danger : that is the danger of introducing political passion into our discussion. That would be bad, not only for our spiritual unity, but also for the clarity of our ideas. You will not take it ill if, as chairman of the group, I make it my business to maintain as peaceful a tone as possible in our discussion.

But I must now introduce you to one another. Here is our friend from the Continent whom I will call "Pro Deo". I did not choose that name myself; but it is the title of the league to which he belongs and which exists for the defence of Christianity. And here is our second "Continental" who calls himself a "Barthian". But I do not quite know what relation he sees between his dialectical theology and his attitude on these questions. That will be for him to explain to us! We have also here our old friend, who has taken part in several of our discussions, and on whom European students bestow the name of "The American Social Gospel". He is moreover proud of this title, although he says that the "Social Gospel" of twenty years ago in his country does not in the least resemble the opinions which he now holds. There is no need to introduce our Chinese: he is easily recognizable. It will be useful to hear what he has to say, for in his country, if Christianity has to be defended, it cannot be too easy in view of the impression of powerlessness in international affairs which the Christian nations have given. And then here am I — the Englishman. I am not going to define my position at present — not just out of modesty. You know that England is not really concerned with how to defend Christianity or how to attack the enemies of the faith. Officially Christianity has no enemies among us. The King at his coronation, the House of Commons deciding about the new Prayer book, those of our Socialists who are faithful members of the non-conformist churches, some of our Anglo-Catholics who hold very advanced views politically, — all these and many others witness to the close union of the Faith with the life of our country: a union, which, in spite of all appearances, is the foundation of our British civilization.

And now the debate is open. I do not wish even to propose a thesis for discussion. Theses will arise quite naturally in the course of the debate.

The Barthian Continental: I want to make a protest at once (*smiles from the rest of the group*): You have just said that we would not discuss Theology. But we have never more truly discussed Theology together, for all our discussion consists in discovering what God we adore and in what faith in Him consists. You always say that "Barthianism" is only a series of parallel paradoxes, a cascade of dialectics, which loses itself among the clouds of speculation and never reaches the solid earth. Today I hope to show you how mistaken you are. But now we must be a little bit more precise. Who are these enemies of Christianity against whom we must align ourselves?

The "Pro Deo" Continental: You know quite well. You only have to open any newspaper to see that this everlasting materialism, although it is not a monopoly of our age, yet finds particularly systematic and aggressive expression in our day. I am not so naïve as to believe that the world has ever been Christian. I am, theologically speaking, a pessimist like our Barthian friend; but I am forced to maintain that today the situation is more serious. For the first time, probably, we see movements actually calling themselves "Godless". (Formerly they left God alone and only called themselves freethinkers!) This aggressive character of their theory and practice is something new, and it is this that we must oppose. That is what my "Pro Deo" League wants to do, and I think it is right. If you like I will explain our programme . . .

The Englishman: I think it would be better not to involve ourselves in an explanation of the programme of any particular organization. We must each say what *we* think and vindicate it ourselves. Otherwise we shall be endlessly discussing those who are not here. You will forgive me if I ask you to express your own opinions.

The Barthian Continental: Certainly! And all the more so because that's just what needs discussion! Are we going

to pledge ourselves, that is to say, as the philosophers put it, are we going to speak "existentially", or, more simply, are we going to speak in an attitude of obedience to the Revelation of God and to nothing else? Or, on the other hand, are we going to say that Christianity is a theory, a civilization, or a harmony of "values", which you can approve or reject, defend or attack without believing in it with all your being? Personally I am convinced that today it is our great misfortune that we are making of Christianity a system of values which exists in some sense apart from the believer: in a word, we have made Christianity something other than a personal faith.

The American: I do not see why you declare war on values. As a matter of fact, in my opinion the Gospel is precisely the harmony of the supreme values, and that is why I call myself a Christian. I find in Jesus' words the most beautiful expression of the ideal of justice and love. It seems to me that all the world can recognize that, and can recognize also that if you applied this ethic the world would not be what it is. Our job as Christians is to proclaim this good news, this golden rule, and to discover how it ought to be applied to all departments of life — economic, social and international . . . But I think we are getting away from our subject. (*The Barthian Continental makes violent signs of disagreement.*) Our job is to define our attitude in the face of the enemies of Christianity. If I understood our friend "Pro Deo" properly — if he must give himself that odd name! — he is thinking chiefly of Marxism. Well, I guess I do not agree with him! Of course, I do not consider historical materialism as the whole truth. Personally I believe that spiritual values are equally important — indeed more so. But that does not prevent me from considering Marxism to be a good method of explaining history. (You have only got to see how world conflicts are explained at bottom by financial interests.) And, what is more, I admire the passion for social justice which exists in Marxism in spite of all its theories. I reckon that, if we Christians had one tenth the revolutionary force of the Communists, we should transform the world and

make it more just and more inhabitable for everybody. So it seems to me that, so far from our defending ourselves against Marxism, we ought to accept all that is good in it and associate ourselves with it as a protest against that capitalistic evil which is contrary to the mind of Christ.

The "Pro Deo" Continental: Really! I am absolutely unable to understand you! Indeed you shock me. How can you forget the anti-religious propaganda that is going on in Russia, Spain, Mexico and in the East? You know well enough that it is closely linked to Marxist theory. You cannot separate them. They must be rejected together. We must defend what Communism denies: the family, our country, religion, human personality; all those things which the Gospel has taught us to love as the will and the gifts of God. And then, if we are Christians, how can we accept even partially this idolatry of man? I repeat, we must be "pessimists", and understand that our natural wickedness must be restrained by order. God Himself has willed that institutions should canalize and repress our natural inclinations, and that, in case of need, they should be defended by force. I know very well that this theory may shock some people. We are always dreaming of an idyllic world which would be the Kingdom of God, and in which men would live according to justice and in love one to another. But we see in the real world the result of these illusions. Consider what is the result of the noble ideals of the Communists: the cultivation of the basest passions, the encouragement of idleness, the materialization of the soul. Moreover, you are well aware that in the Soviet paradise, there is no hesitation in employing the most brutal force. Think of the scandal of the Moscow trials! That is what godlessness leads to. Do you want us to collaborate — even to the smallest extent — with such fellows? Certainly not! For my part, I wish to defend myself against them with all my might. Please understand me. I said that I want to defend myself, for they are doing the attacking, and what I want to defend is not myself but all that makes life worth living for me: I mean those values of which you were speaking just now.

The Chinese: I find it hard to follow you, for where are these values you are talking about? I mean to say where are they realized? I assure you that the appearance of your Western civilization does not give us the impression that your Christian values are worth that much! For a long time I believed that, in addition to your material civilization, you brought us an ideal of life superior to that which we knew in my country. I believed that democracy was really linked to Christianity . . .

The "Pro Deo" Continental: But who is talking about democracy? . . .

The Chinese: Well, they talked to us about it. People told us that it was the system under which human beings are respected as the Gospel commands, and each man is able to develop all his gifts; and under which they seek to reconcile the general interest and the interest of each individual by an agreement reached by free consultation . . . But now I see that your "Christian" democratic countries are as imperialistic and as egoistic as our own. Is it worth while defending this egoism and imperialism as you say we should? Do you really believe that in defending them you are defending Christianity? For my part, I am a Christian because I love Jesus Christ. We must defend Him and Him alone. And to defend Him means to live as He lived and as He has commanded us. That is the only thing that I can say to my fellow countrymen. They would not believe the rest. And besides that, if you talk simply of the family, of property and of order, I shall say that we have all that in our non-Christian tradition, which is much older than Western Christianity.

The Englishman: All the same it seems to me that there is a Christian conception of the world and that we must defend it. The only thing is, how are we to know how to defend it, and, what is more, what exactly is it? For my part I disapprove of the use of violence when ideas are at stake. In my country we are accustomed to leave each man free to express any opinions he likes. Even Communists enjoy this liberty — provided that they do not attempt

to impose their ideas by force. I believe that it is just for that very reason that we have so few Communists. I confess that I am a little afraid of these theories of violence put at the service of evangelical truth. It seems to me that the content of the ideal must be its own defence. Only we Christians must not stop short at talking about it : we must also live it more completely.

The "Pro Deo" Continental : I know that I am in a difficult position because in theory you have reason on your side. But that is the point ! You are just being theoretical. You make beautiful hypotheses, and, if need be, you generously protest your humility. You say : "our ideal would be convincing, if we lived up to it". But why then do you not live up to it instead of blaming yourselves ? And again, have you forgotten that there have been saints who *have* actually lived up to this ideal, and that it has convinced nobody ? To begin with Jesus Christ Himself — He was abandoned by all and crucified precisely because He did live the Sermon on the Mount.

The Barthian Continental : Are you saying that Jesus Christ should have defended himself by force ? Would he have done better to have allowed his disciples to draw the sword ?

The "Pro Deo" Continental : Do not make me say such a stupid thing — which seems almost blasphemous. Jesus was Jesus. But his disciples have not the same work to do as He. They *must* prevent the denial of all that Jesus taught and of all the "orders of creation" which He approved and sanctified. They may have to do so by force ; but, naturally, I prefer to see it done by propaganda.

The Chinese : Then that means that we must preach the Sermon on the Mount and advise people to live by that rule ?

The "Pro Deo" Continental : That is a different question. The Sermon on the Mount is not made to be applied to social life. But one must be able to preach it as God's Law, which each Christian should try his best to apply in this evil world in which we live. In order that we may be able to preach it,

we must have a certain degree of liberty and a social order which recognizes the fundamental basis of Christianity. If, from the time he goes to school, you tell the child that there is no God, that the family is not a sacro-sanct institution, and that countries are only ephemeral historical realities — if you shut the churches — how do you think anyone would ever become a Christian ?

The American : I totally disagree with the practical ideas which you express. But I enjoy hearing you say that we must work for a certain social order. It is a pleasure to meet a Continental who is not an individualist, who does not live in an abstract world, and who is interested in realizing the will of God concretely in social institutions. My quarrel with you is, that you have a static mentality. You must be more dynamic than that. I agree that, as far as the family is concerned, we need no revolutionary changes. But do you not think it possible that countries and social orders may change in the course of history ? For my part, I am convinced that to progress means, for the Christian, to imbue these institutions unceasingly with a greater degree of justice. To put the whole thing in a nutshell, it is a question of “moralizing” — or if you prefer it, of “Christianizing” our civilization. And it is right there that I find the Communist ethic higher than that of a bourgeois capitalism which calls itself Christian. This capitalism was once useful, but its time has passed and it has become completely immoral.

The Continental Barthian : I am amazed to find that the whole discussion turns on Communism, as though that was the only adversary of Christianity. I have no sympathy at all for historical materialism and Marxism. But I do not find totalitarian nationalism any better. How will you defend Christianity against these other philosophies which are as pagan as that of Moscow ? For my part, I reject them both equally strenuously.

The Englishman : Does that mean that you are prepared to use violent means to defend yourself against them both ? After all, I repeat, it is here that the real problem for us is to

be found. *Can force be used in the service of Jesus Christ?* I find it difficult to admit that it can.

The "Pro Deo" Continental: Obviously I recognize that Fascism and National Socialism, in so far as they are religious, are altogether anti-Christian, and that the Church ought to oppose them, -- I would prefer to say -- to oppose their totalitarian claims in the spiritual sphere. But, as in practice we cannot be entirely negative, if it comes to a choice I prefer these forms of government to godless Marxism. At least they represent a minimum of order which is not completely incompatible with a Christian civilization.

The American: Do you really mean to defend Franco? Do you think it is legitimate for priests to say Mass with a tank as an altar? I simply cannot understand your position at all! I think the solution is to look elsewhere than among these non-Christian philosophies. In spite of what our Chinese friend has said, I think that a democracy which ceaselessly checks itself up and improves itself, is the most favourable field for the liberty of Christianity, and I also think that it can be the best political expression of the spirit of the Gospel.

The Barthian Continental: Our discussion is very symptomatic. To begin with, it is extraordinary how excited we become when our political preferences are involved. Does not that prove that we are all idolaters? We are ready to pledge our best selves for the sake of a civilization or a human political system, yet when I become heated about theology you all accuse me of being academic and out of touch with real life. And yet, do you not all think, at least in theory, that it is more important than anything else to know whether one is saved in the sight of God? Then why do you feel yourselves more deeply roused by the mention of Fascism or Communism than by the divinity of Jesus Christ or the sacraments of the Church? Why is it that we all devote ourselves with an absolute passion to relative causes, and why have we only a relative interest in the absolute Revelation? Is it not because we are all more or less totalitarian

in the way of this world ? For us, God is a part of our life with everything else. Certainly, we give Him the biggest place ; He is the crown of our edifice ; but the other stones which make up this edifice are all human realities. That is precisely what being totalitarian means : to use God, and in some cases to use the negation of God, for building our life on earth. But what we use is *not* God. For He does not allow us to do it. It is merely the idea of God, that is to say, an idol. Do not misunderstand me. When the Communist declares himself, to be godless and issues atheist propaganda, what is it that he denies ? A phantom, a God in whom he does not believe. Then why does he need to deny Him ?

And when the National-Socialist speaks of Providence, what does he mean ? The spirit of Blood and Soil, another idol, perhaps more real, but no more divine and certainly no more Christian. But none of them know that God is He Who is above all earthly realities, all men's ideas, all history, Who cannot be conceived or used, to Whom one can only submit oneself, body and soul.

The American : What do you mean by that ? If God has nothing in common with all the realities and the ideas of this world, then it is as though He did not exist. Once more, I declare that you are losing yourself in abstractions. You are making an idea of God yourself, and a useless idea at that !

The Barthian Continental : But that is just it — I do not want people to make use of God. And that is exactly where I quarrel with my " *Pro Deo* " friend.

The " Pro Deo " Continental : Do not misrepresent my thought. I do not say that I want to use God, but that I want to defend Him.

The Barthian Continental : It comes to the same thing. Besides there is no need to worry. He can defend Himself. He does not need us for that.

The Englishman : And yet God really does need us. St. Paul says that we are His fellow-workers.

The Barthian Continental: Is there not all the difference in the world between being workers with God in what *God* does, and associating God with what *we* are doing ?

The Chinese: I do not quite understand. What is the difference ? Do you mean that God must not be constantly integrated in our real life ?

The Barthian Continental: Of course He must be. Only what is our real life ? That is just where we all need to be more realistic. We are all inclined to think that this real life is either what we call our religious life, our fine thoughts about God, our mystical feelings ; or else it is our every-day existence, our outward acts, political, social, etc. And with all that we forget that our real life is certainly that which was saved by God in Jesus Christ. Have you ever thought of what St. Paul said : " Your life is hidden with Christ in God " ? It is a mysterious saying, but if I understand it rightly, it means that for God our real existence is a mystery bound up in what Jesus Christ has done and in what He is doing this very moment as He prays for us. You see, we do not need to defend that, because nothing in the world can attack it. A Christian who, as St. Paul goes on, " seeks the things which are above ", that is to say, Christ risen from the dead, who believes in Him, who is sure that this resurrection of Christ means victory over the world, and who in this faith awaits the day of his own resurrection, such a man has nothing to protect from the godless or even from the religious pagans of totalitarian states. The only thing he has to protect is his faith. And he does that in prayer. Such a faith overcomes the world.

The Englishman: I am much impressed by what you have just said, although I am not sure that I have fully understood it.

The Barthian Continental: Neither do I fully understand it ; nevertheless I understand enough to believe it.

The Englishman: Only, what worries me in all this is that you seem to be preoccupied solely with your personal

salvation. What about all the others who do not believe? Must we just resign ourselves to the fact that they have no real life?

The "Pro Deo" Continental: Yes, that is the point. Must we not defend the possibility of all of them becoming Christians? Will they not more easily become so in a civilization which conforms with the order of creation than in anarchy or atheism?

The Barthian Continental: I am not explaining my meaning very well — or rather, you do not let me develop what I have to say. I do not think for an instant of my personal salvation as though it were a privilege won at the expense of others, or as though it gave me the right to give up all interest in the eternal destiny of other men. It was not only for me that Christ died, it was for all. It is the world which He controls now that He is at the right hand of the Father, and the world that He prays for. Every man belongs to Him in virtue of the divine right that He has over every man, not only through the Creation, but through the blood of His Cross. And it is this whole world which I do not wish to defend as though it did not belong to Almighty God, but to which I want to proclaim that God loves it all. It is to the proclamation of this message that we must devote all our strength, and not to the vain protection of Christian values!

The "Pro Deo" Continental: Yes — but you must still be allowed to proclaim this message. And that is where you are bound to defend the independence of the Church.

The Barthian Continental: Certainly, I shall defend it, and with all the means that the law gives me. It may even happen, if one day I have to fight, that I may think that God will use the atrocious evil of this war to ensure that His Church has liberty to preach the Gospel — as He now uses what we call peace! Only, it is *God* who will do that; and if it were in my power I would not declare war for that motive. You see, we must learn that we cannot mobilize God like an Army corps — even in His own cause. His unfathomable will directs the destinies of the nations: that is my faith. That faith cannot become a political method.

The American: These distinctions seem to me very hard to grasp. I must admit that I am very troubled about this whole problem. Formerly I was a radical pacifist. Now, with so much violence let loose in the world, I really do not know where I stand. Sometimes it seems to me that our duty as Christians is to stand out against injustice and the violation of law with all the means at our disposal. But however much I want to, I cannot exactly figure out the place of God in all this.

The Chinese: To go back to what I was saying a few moments ago. Is it not enough, in this complex world, to become a disciple of Jesus Christ and for each of us to try to live out His teaching ?

The Englishman: It is not as easy as all that. To begin with we do not always know how to live out the Gospel, — the Sermon on the Mount for example. And then there is always the Church. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is not only an experiment for us to make individually ; it also means belonging to a body, being part of a community. Now this community is a visible one. It is a reality in this world which comes into conflict with the other realities of this world. Sometimes they oppose it and sometimes they make use of it. What is the Church to do ? If, as is her duty, she is to be, so to speak, the soul of this world, what is she to do if the world refuses to be “ animated ” by her ? These questions seem all the more difficult to me because, as I have said, they do not arise in my country as they do in others. We are no better than other lands, but with us religion has a part to play in politics. We believe in Right. (He turns towards the “ Pro Deo ”.) Would you agree that to defend the Right is to defend Christianity ? The conclusion would be that you must protect the Right by lawful means, by legal institutions, national or international . . .

The “ Pro Deo ” Continental: I cannot quite agree with you. For it is precisely this theoretical Right, this idealism which you advocate, which does not take the realism of life into account. Alas ! this realism makes us use every means in

our power to defend order, which is unceasingly threatened by individual and collective outbursts of disorder.

The Barthian Continental: I do not think we shall ever reach a conclusion unless we change the direction of this discussion. At present we do nothing but defend our own positions instead of trying to discover together what is at the root of the question. Instead of discussing means of defence could we not discuss against whom we must or must not defend ourselves? We continually speak of the "adversaries of God". What does that mean? Has God adversaries? Who is an adversary for Him?

The "Pro Deo" Continental: Obviously, those who deny Him, who attack Him, or who persecute Christians.

The Barthian Continental: Are you quite sure? On the contrary, my opinion is that the adversaries of God are not other people, but you and me. Or, at any rate, that we are as much adversaries of God as those who lay claim to be such. Who crucifies Jesus Christ? The believing Jews just as much as the pagan Romans, Christians as much as the godless! The enmity which exists between God and ourselves is that of sin. And every man is a sinner. What action did God take against all this human race which saw in Him an adversary? Did He defend Himself? Far from it. He gave His Son. It was His only defence. Who are we that we should invent other methods, and execute judgment in His place? That is not our business. I recall the parable of the tares, in which we are told not to root them up, but to wait till God takes this upon Himself at the last day.

The American: But all the same we cannot put up with evil without doing something about it. Would you stand for unconditional non-violence?

The Barthian Continental: Certainly not. You know that I concede the right of the State to wield the sword — that I even would allow, though with more difficulty, the possibility of making war; but arms are not to be used in every case and for every motive. They can do nothing for or against faith.

The misfortune is that we do not believe that faith in itself is a weapon of defence or attack. We forget St. Paul's words : " For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strong holds) : casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ " (II Cor. x, 3-5). If we had those weapons, we should not fear any others.

The Englishman : I agree with you there — that if the Church prayed better and believed in its prayer, if we were more faithful to the grace of the sacrament, if we loved each other as we are loved, we should win very unexpected victories. I am convinced of that. But what surprises me is that another vaster hope is continually springing up within me — that of seeing the Church and its ideal more incarnate in the world. I cannot resign myself to there not being a continuous interchange between a believing Church and an unbelieving world, so that the world may be sanctified.

The Barthian Continental : Nor can I. But it is a terrible sign of the weakness of our faith that we always want at all costs to establish these relations between the Church and the world ourselves, and according to our own plans. If only the Church were the Church, and even if she occupied herself with nothing else but that, she would still shine as a light in the darkness, " the world would see her good works and glorify the Father which is in Heaven ". For all that we believe in the Church we do not believe that she is a miracle of God, a miracle which can convince.

The American : I am with you there. But what are the practical things to be done, since we do not live only in the Church but must spend every day in the world, and cannot wait for miracles but must do something at once ?

The Barthian Continental : Perhaps the only thing that we can do in the great perplexity in which we all are, is to live every day in the world as though belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ. That means many concrete things. For

example it means that in everything we do and decide we think first of what Jesus Christ expects of us and of what he has done for us. The will and the love of God for us and for the world are our first concern. In the same way our brothers are not first of all the men who share our political opinions or who belong to the same nation as ourselves, but those who share the same faith. If only there were a company of men who always make their decisions (whatever their decision may be) throughout their whole lives *for the sake of Jesus Christ*, and who look on other men as those for whom Christ died; if there were a company of men who do not despair of this world because it is the world which God has created and saved; if only they had confidence in this world not because of its virtues and of its beauty, but simply because of God's love for it; then indeed we should defend our faith against all its adversaries in the most effective manner.

The Chinese: Does that mean that when you Western Christians come to us as missionaries you will consider us simply as brothers in Jesus Christ? If you really did that; if you were able to forget that you were English or German, French or American, and remember first of all that you are Christians; if you worked with us for a Chinese Church — not nationalist, but solely for the service of Jesus Christ in China, — perhaps we should be less tormented and often less bitter . . .

The "Pro Deo" Continental: On the main points I am absolutely in agreement. But all the same I am still a little perplexed. I wonder whether we should not perhaps, as a desperate but necessary measure, defend all that is still Christian in civilization, ideas, institutions, traditions, etc. I wonder whether for this work, which might be quite peaceable, we should not gather together all men of good will and make a united front of Christians, even including spiritualists. We are engaged in a great battle, and in every war one has to accept allies with whom one is not in agreement on every point.

The American: That is just what I was saying about Communism.

The Barthian Continental: And that is just where I cannot agree. *Either* we believe that Jesus Christ — and not “Christian values” — is the truth, and in that case we cannot assimilate His cause to that of anyone else at all, even if there are external points of resemblance between a certain human moral system and the moral system of the Gospel; *or else* we no longer believe in Jesus Christ but in a certain number of ideas, and we are no longer Christians. We must have the courage to be more totalitarian than that. Communism, Fascism, National-Socialism believe more strongly in the truths they teach and are ready to sacrifice everything to them. They can take risks better than we can; they have more of the heroism required by faith than we have. When we really give our lives for this certainty that Christ has saved the world by His death and resurrection; when we proclaim it with passion and without flinching; then surely we shall discover that the gates of Hell do not prevail against Christ, the Son of the Living God.

The Englishman: I do not know whether this discussion has really clarified our thoughts. But several things have impressed me.

First that we must give up the long cherished hope of finding a simple solution to the problem of the relations between God, the Church, Christianity and the world. We need to begin to think that all out again; and we must start not with the world but with Christianity and Jesus Christ. In the second place, I am once more convinced that all problems end up by being personal. We want solutions, and we think we should accept them if they were shown to be true; but the real solution is that we should ourselves believe more strongly in Jesus Christ, for ourselves and for mankind. We always behave as though we could take that belief for granted. We consider our faith *as though it existed by itself*. Now we realize that it does not so exist, but that we must continually begin again at the beginning, and choose Christ anew every day as He is given to us in the Bible and in the Church. I am sure that if this discussion has brought us to a decision of this kind, in spite of its confusion it will not have been in vain.

THE EDITOR'S TRAVEL DIARY

The European Conference of Theological Students

It seemed at first a somewhat risky matter to arrange a Federation Conference in such a way that each delegate would spend New Year's Eve in a Dutch family. Would they turn up again at "Woudschoten" on New Year's Day, and would they be sufficiently fresh to continue the Conference? Well, they were there, and started the year with a lively and penetrating discussion of the possibility of Christian civilization.

That discussion proved to be the centre of all our deliberations and the point of crystallization of all that had come before. The question put to the Continentals by the British delegates was: "Do you believe at all in the idea of Christendom, that is, of a Christian civilization, or do you believe that the very attempt to build a Christian order is wrong in principle?" It was interesting to note that nobody accepted the second alternative, but that there was much divergence of opinion as to the meaning of the first alternative, and especially as to the timeliness of the question itself. Here it became very clear that the difference between British and Continental Christian thought is not in the last place a difference in the interpretation of the present situation of the Church in the world. The British, while not denying that there will always be tension between the Church and the world, felt that the Church might still be given an opportunity to transform civilization; but the Continentals were so conscious of the "end of the Constantine era" and of the unavoidable opposition between the Church and the modern world, that they could not consider the question as truly relevant, and tended to concentrate all their attention on what to them seemed the prior question: How to build a Church which can endure the present and coming conflicts with the world. To them "Christendom" seemed a notion which was quite outside their reach. It was curious to see that Reinhold Niebuhr, who was present in spirit through one of his disciples, seemed to build a bridge between the two points of view; for his understanding of the irreconcilable opposition between the divine will and the concrete reality of society combined with his call to definite social choices seemed to find a real echo in both camps.

There were, however, no solid blocks. And in questions of theology there was often remarkable unanimity. Perhaps the most striking phenomenon, striking at least for those who have known the European Theological Conferences of six or seven years ago, is the way in which

theological students from so many different backgrounds all take it for granted that liberalism in theology is a thing of the past. One does not know whether one should rejoice in this very decided turning to more substantial theology, or whether one should secretly wish for a reappearance of liberalism in order to get students at least to face its very real and in many respects very healthy challenge to orthodoxy.

In Great Britain

The Conference for Theological Students at Swanwick was the most representative meeting of its kind which has been held for many years. This was surely not only due to the organizing abilities of the Theological College Department of the S.C.M., but also to the fact that world events of the last years as well as the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences have begun to make an impression on the quiet world of the Theological Colleges in Great Britain.

That this is really a new beginning became clear from the reactions of the delegates to those addresses which painted the present situation of the Church and of the world in the grimly realistic colours which alone seem adequate to express the modern scene. On many delegates these had a somewhat stunning effect, because they did not seem to be related to their normal environment. The result was that the Conference spoke a great deal about the need of a new theology, but that there were as yet few signs of the emergence of such a theology. It was perhaps too little realized that a new theology does not appear simply because the situation seems to call for it, but rather because men, forgetting everything else, dive deeply into the realm of God's Revelation and let divine truth take hold of them. A new theology cannot be "constructed", it can only be discovered and received.

If the Swanwick Conference is seen as the beginning of a process, it may prove to have been a very significant meeting. Already groups in many Colleges are trying to think further along the lines of the Conference, and further conferences of the same kind are being planned. I believe that this work has a great future, if it can be given the theological content which it needs in order to become a vital force in the Churches of Great Britain.

A short visit to the Student Congress of the League of Nations Union at Glasgow left the impression that these are difficult times for those who stand for the academic and objective study of international problems. Although the programme was attractive, the Congress was not well attended. Moreover, there is something pathetic in every meeting on this subject today, for the good-will which finds expression in such gatherings seems so hopelessly out of proportion to the complexity of our present problems. This impression becomes all the more marked if there

s no common bond of conviction which holds the whole group together. One can only admire those who continue to fulfil their academic duty of studying international problems before taking any particular political stand. But one wonders at the same time, whether it is still possible or useful to pursue such studies on a "neutral" basis. I do not mean to suggest that the adherents of each faith or ideology should discuss these problems in isolation from each other, but rather that, if they meet, they should state very clearly what are the presuppositions of their particular stand. At Glasgow this was only done to a very limited extent, and in the special discussion group on "Christianity and Peace" rather than in the Conference as a whole. Here lies a great task for the members of the Federation who are active in peace movements. They should use every occasion to make it unmistakably clear that the basis of their interest in peace as well as the motive of their work for peace is in their Christian convictions.

In Northern Ireland

If Great Britain is very much an island, Ireland is an island behind another island. It leaves an impression of solidity such as one can hardly find anywhere else except in some other smaller nations which happen to live at some distance from the world's centres of political and spiritual traffic. To it the European Continent in its present state of fluidity and with its feverish search for new reintegrating forces must appear as a strange world which lives in a different period of history. For the disintegrating forces of modern life do not seem to have touched Northern Ireland as yet to any very considerable extent. Its Puritan tradition is still unbroken.

I wonder whether there is any other place in the world where Puritanism is still such a powerful reality. In comparison with Northern Ireland even Scotland seems very much secularized. This does not mean, however, that Puritan theology is a force in Northern Ireland. The Puritan forms of life are so tenacious that they can live on a long time after the theology upon which they are based has disappeared. But it does mean that the Puritan sense of Churchmanship and the Puritan code of conduct dominate life more visibly than anywhere else.

The younger generation in Northern Ireland is therefore faced with problems which their contemporaries in other countries are no longer facing. In most other Protestant countries the revolt of youth against the orthodoxies of the past has come to an end, because these orthodoxies have been shaken in their roots, or (and) youth itself has become in a new way orthodox. But in Northern Ireland this revolt is raging in full force and will surely continue until Puritanism accepts the challenge of the times and reconsiders its own presuppositions.

The impression which the Church makes upon students is defined in an editorial in the Belfast student periodical : " To be honest and industrious, to achieve worldly success and to commit no sin which is not respectable, to have a due regard for ecclesiastical authority, and to avoid close friendship with those of the Romish persuasion — such it would seem, is the whole end of man ". The constant use of the sectarian appeal in the political struggle with the South, and the constant mixture of purely traditional and religious motives, are producing an inevitable reaction which at the moment seems especially an anti-Church reaction, but which might very easily develop (as it has elsewhere) into a general anti-religious reaction.

Much of all this came out during the University Mission at Belfast, and especially during the debate in the Student Union on the motion : " That this House is of the opinion that inside the Church there is salvation, neither for the individual, nor for society ". It was really an excellent idea of the S.C.M. to accept the challenge to have that debate on one of the evenings of the Mission week. And it was a good and useful experience for the " Missioner " to speak that night as a debater from the floor rather than as the only speaker from the all-too-safe platform of a large auditorium. I wish that we could have such debates during every Mission.

Two things struck me during that evening. The first was that the attack upon the Church was so largely a religious attack. These students felt instinctively that the Church is not what it ought to be according to its inherent mission, and thus they showed that they believed a great deal more in the Church than they were willing to admit.

But the second impression was that, when they began to formulate what they desired the Church to be or to do, they did not present a picture of a Church more true to itself, less embedded in the existing social order, and consequently less secularized, but rather the picture of a Church even more adapted to the demands of the world. In other words their criticism came from underneath the present Church, and not from above it.

I left Belfast with the feeling that the S.C.M. has a wonderful task in such a situation. It has an opportunity to show that Christian faith is faith in God and not adherence to certain traditional convictions, and that the renewal of the Church depends on the emergence of a deeper and more Biblical conception of the Church. I hope that they will use this opportunity while it lasts. For the time will surely come, as it is coming to all Churches sooner or later, when the Church in Northern Ireland will be tested, not as to its traditional qualities, but as to its spiritual vitality.

V. 't H.

THE STUDENT WORLD CHRONICLE

Unemployment and Communism among Indian Students

In his most interesting brochure on The Revolutionary Mind in India Today, Mr. N. C. Mukerji, Lecturer in Philosophy and Warden of Holland Hall (Allahabad University), gives the following account of unemployment of intellectuals in India and its effects upon their thinking.

Gandhism had a short Indian summer, but today Communism is largely the faith of Youth. What exactly Communism is, it is not easy to define. It is more a spirit, capable of varied and often times very contradictory formulations, with Christian Social Thought at one end, and the Police and Red Moscow variety at the other. An Indian edition of it is, however, under order. Whatever its composition and inspiration, it is bound to have a rich deposit of Gandhism in it, taking from it, even while being dialectically developed against it. The Intelligent Young Man today has his Red Library, and is at home in the Canonical books of the Faith.

More than the definition of Communism, it is important for the understanding of our problem : how Youth has come to think communistically ? The fact is that Youth, we mean educated Youth, is without prospect of bread today, unless protected by influence, inherited wealth, or the virtue of the competitive machine, which has succeeded to the Car of Juggernaut, in our devotions today.

The world is for the few, not for the many. Youth cannot begin today where their fathers began. If fortunate enough, they have to begin much lower down and have to have much higher qualifications. For the fathers, education was a passport, for the children it is a disadvantage leading to nowhere. These young men have been taught to think they are "unwanted". Year after year that infallible test of Genius, the Competitive Examination, calls them to its halls to read their horoscopes and pronounce judgment ; and year after year the condemned many go down with the old gladiatorial cry on their lips : *Ave, Caesar, morituri te salutant.*¹ Supermen alone can

¹ Hail, Caesar, men doomed to die salute thee !

live; it is a sub-human existence for the many. Not the Galilaean but Nietzsche rules our thought and practice here.

But the trouble is that the unfit are the many. They have the weight of numbers, on their side, are educated, perhaps semi-educated, and refuse to take the judgment on them as final. India is too big a country to be peopled by geniuses alone, and a pyramidal structure ill fits in with the trappings of a democratic state.

While the educated classes are struggling to secure a "fair living", with the masses it is a question of a "bare living". Between them, thus, has been raised the whole issue: whether man is for the system or the system for man. The situation requires not individual amelioration. It has got beyond that. It needs mass improvement, and that quickly. Delay spells danger. Many are pinning their faith on an industrial development. This, in the first place, is one of the big "ifs" and, secondly, no planned production will help which is not supplemented by planned distribution as well. The heart of the social question is juster distribution of wealth.

Youth has lost nerve. It has lost heart and hope as to the willingness of their elders, who had happier times for themselves, mobilizing forces on their behalf. Power has to be wrested first, irrespective of the character of those using it, and the ends to which it is put, be it remembered, if at all anything is to be got done. This is the conviction to which Youth has settled down. It is the Gospel of Despair!

We will have to break through all records and think in new categories, if we are to be of any help here. It should be possible to organize and finance on an India-wide scale a corps of social servants, men and women who would live on a basis of sharing, and experiment in simpler living. They should not be exploited by being asked to live the ascetic life on the zero scale. On the other hand, a moderate standard of an educated man's life, not very lavish nor very meagre, should be ensured them. Adequate medical aid, facilities for proper education of children, protection in old age, should be made available to them. They should further have every chance of keeping up their intellectual life and increasing their experience in every possible way, so that the country would get their very best. Within the bounds of such a service, there will be room enough and to spare for all the educated unemployed. We can thus turn a disaster into an opportunity.

When one thinks of the amount of work that has to be done in the nation-building departments, the utter inadequacy of the existing attempts and their rate of progress, and, further, the utter impossibility of our finding more money for them in our present or future

budgets, one feels that this unemployment has come to us to shake us out of our complacent grooves and make us prospect for newer ways of living and work. We have satisfied ourselves so far by criticizing the Government for it, and asking for adjustments impossible at present. And now when we have the human material whereby we can correct the defect, we do not know how to utilize it. Some of us are even bewildered by the numbers. India needs not less but more highly educated men, if her problems are to be adequately tackled and her great life modernized.

To us, who swear by Law and Order, Loyalists, Reformists *et hoc genus omne* the realization must come that Constitutionalism cannot be saved without the paying of a price. And the price in this case is to put our hands in our pockets and furnish the wherewithal for such an organization, which will adequately meet "Educated unemployment". We all must bear our share in it. The man with the fixed salary, the professional man, the landlord, the businessman, the industrialist, and the rest. If we do not have money for this, we shall have money before long for the restraining of destructive activities, for jails and detention camps. Government as the maintainer of Law and Order should be the first body to be interested in the raising of such a fund, and its wheels should move faster than usual. The Government and the Devil are running a race to capture Youth. Can Government put worth while work in the way of the unemployed? or is the Devil to function in the matter?

It is bad husbandry for the elders to let the generation of youth go to waste. The economic order which is crushing them has given us positions. We are the beneficiaries of the system and they the victims. It does not lie in our mouth, therefore, to preach to them. We can afford to be moral and religious. We are paid for it. Would we have talked and behaved the way we are doing, if positions had been reversed? Ours, they thus feel, is interested propaganda. As a matter of fact, Religion for us is on the periphery and needs to be central. The only way in which we can prevent the present moral and spiritual rot in Youth and promote recovery is by giving an arresting demonstration of our willingness to find work for them, by organizing e.g. a body as sketched above. Anything short of it being but adding insult to injury. Their cynicism will thaw only before the warmth of the generous deed. And it is only when they will be up against the practicalities of Reconstruction that they will be weaned from fruitless criticism and questionable activities.

Any outlay on a body of workers, like the one envisaged, will be more than paid back in eventual increase in wealth, peace and contentment. Such a body, besides, will give a new turn to our

thoughts and help society to swing finally, by peaceful evolution, from its present acquisitive to the contributive basis. Most of the changes we now desiderate will then become easier. The salaries of the services would more naturally scale down in such an environment ; the people would be unified and we shall thus become fitter for taking up the defence of our country ; and this will reduce considerably the present high military expenditure. All this cannot happen in a day, but they will be brought about quicker than at our present snail pace. It is as the impression gets abroad that problems are being tackled and not jettisoned or pushed to the Greek Calends that confidence will reappear and our outlook become realistic.

Next to the Government, the body that should be interested in promoting a scheme like this is our Universities. They have been the sinews of our progress. But with changing conditions they have fallen on evil times and evil tongues. They are the butt of every wit in the country. The emphasis now has shifted from University to Primary Education, and University budgets are being cut down to finance it. It is a case of either-or. The only way to overcome the dilemma is to connect the University and the Primary Education needs, through an organization of University men, as suggested here. Our Universities, if they are to live, will have to change their set ways and adapt themselves to the changed environment. Then only they will be able to tap the financial resources of the country, by appealing to its imagination as solving her practical problems and not merely theoretical ones, however important these be. The Universities might take a leaf here from the Lindsay Report¹ and realize that the only way in which to keep their primacy is to take a more direct interest in meeting the needs of the underprivileged, establish contacts with the villages and promote literacy and adult education, organize the production of popular reading and make it worth while for University men to be employed in such activities. In Modern India we do not have a class of men answering to the Christian clergy, who, in the West, do a great deal of social work in a missionary spirit. It should be the aim of the Universities to create out of their products such a class of Social Servants for us. Universities should not merely talk of the Common Good, important though that be, but help in the creation of a society where it is practiced, and not add one more class — an educated class — to our existing plethora of classes. Our Universities must take the Moral Life more under its charge and be distinguished exponents of it. If we cannot have religious beliefs,

¹ Report on Christian Higher Education in India, under the chairmanship of Dr. Lindsay, the Master of Balliol.

let us at least have the religious deeds, or the cause of discipline and the influence of Youth would be lost. We shall then reduce ourselves to the status of fossil and curio hunters and not be, what we should, the servants of the people. Further, the Universities should not confine themselves only to the prize boys. They certainly make excellent game cocks. Advancement of Knowledge is a fine thing, but the Advancement of Man is better. The two however are not mutually exclusive. The Gracious Mother should not be step-motherly to the ordinary student. But, on the other hand, should take pride in raising the general level, changing the assinine to the equine virtues. Otherwise Universities would play into the hands of Reaction, and Divine Philosophy become procuress to the Lords of Hell. If the ordinary and the extraordinary man could be locked together in an essentially cooperative order, the Kingdom of Heaven would have come on earth, and Communism would have lost its terrors. But the first step towards it should be to give a practical illustration of it within our present Capitalistic system. What seems immediately practicable we have outlined. The *Status quo* cannot indefinitely continue. The fateful choice is between Construction and Destruction.

We have so far concerned ourselves with how Youth has come to think communistically. We have done it because we feel that no criticism of Communism can be valid which does not furnish the response to the element of truth in it. Having attempted this, we are free to point out what seem its shortcomings.

Communism strikes us as an inverted form of Religion. It seeks to establish the Kingdom of God on earth by force, and force alone — a contradiction in terms. Its unbelief in God makes for unbelief in Man. Man is by nature selfish and he has to be made to act unselfishly. As he cannot change, so the only way to make him is to break him. Human beings thus have to be reduced to automata. Communism has no place for the individual and therefore for the family. The Whole has devoured the Part. The individual being denied all worth, we are introduced into a deterministic world, and made the play of forces outside of us. Good and evil lose their meaning, for relativity is everything and the Absolute standard nowhere. As neither thinking nor living is possible without allowing for the Absolute, we find here a discrepancy between theory and practice in Communism. In practice, Communism has its Absolute, and it is the State. The State is supra-moral and supra-everything. What we arrive at is thus a Slave State. We have not gone up, but down. We should however remember that the Indian version of Communism has every chance of evolving a distinctness of its own. It will not be

the original brand, for it will be a cross between Gandhism and Marxism. So at least it seems, judging by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's evolution. He wants the Russian fruit without the Russian blood. He allows for individual conversion, and is not against the family or even private property, properly defined. All this seems a long way from strict Scientific Socialism.

Notes on Christian Trends of Thought in the U. S. A.

The following extracts from a series of lectures given by Dr. Georgia Harkness of Mount Holyoke College at the Fifth Rocky Mountain Conference of the Hazen Foundation give a clear picture of present-day trends of Christian thought in the U.S.A.

Resurgence of Interest in Religious Living as a Social Phenomenon

(a) *The present situation.* The prevailing temper is secularism. The statement is often made that Christianity is now more under fire than in any previous period since Constantine. This is untrue regarding standards of conduct, for there has been a permeation of Western society by Christian mores which will presumably be permanent. However, it is true regarding ideologies, for there is now more organization of life in indifference to Christian ideals, and greater clash with rival totalitarian movements, than at any time since Christianity became the accepted faith of the West.

Within this secularism there are signs of a growing interest in personal religious living. Among its evidences are the popularity of such books as *The Return to Religion*, the influence of the Oxford Groups, attendance at the services of the National Preaching Mission, the formation of discussion groups in churches, and the interest shown by students in finding a religion to live by.

(b) *Causes.* The factors contributing to this resurgence of interest are of diverse moral quality. Among them are the following.

1. *The collapse of personal security* resulting from loss of economic props, failure of international cooperation, and disintegration of the accepted mores has left many groping and has bred a desperate but inchoate awareness of need.
2. *Weariness with moral instability* is replacing the new freedom which was hailed with acclaim in the post-war years.
3. *Personal religion is taken up as an escape from social action* as the industrial situation becomes more acute and pacifism becomes increasingly difficult to maintain.
4. *The rise of*

rival ideologies has had divergent results. For a small but vocal group, Communism is a substitute for religion; in general, capitalism and nationalism are subconsciously absolutized and given religious sanction; in a few, whose insights and influence far exceed their numbers, there has been a constructive permeation of Christian faith by the ideals of Communism. In this third group, personal religion is often intensified and enriched. Cf. Vida Scudder's *On Journey*.

5. *The rise of "realistic" theology* has been both a cause and an effect of a growing interest in personal religion. This neo-supernaturalism, which is neither fundamentalist nor modernist, neither liberal nor Barthian, aims to recapture the insights of historic Christianity and with them the sources of power for religious living.

The Relations of Religious Living to Theology

A theology is a systematic interpretation of a personal religious faith. While faith is primary, a theology when once established turns back upon experience and redirects the course of faith and its fruits in life. Every theology has its characteristic approach to religious living. The theologies dominant in the West in the present and recent past may be broadly classified as follows :

(a) *Orthodoxy*. Orthodoxy, whether in the form of Roman Catholicism or Protestant fundamentalism, puts a high estimate on the so-called puritan virtues of industry, thrift, honesty, sobriety, chastity and reverence. With minor variations (e.g., the Catholic opposition to divorce and birth control and sanction of temperance rather than abstinence), there is more of agreement than difference and it is doubtful whether Weber was justified in speaking of a "Protestant ethic". Orthodoxy of both types emphasizes personal probity in small-group relations and reinforces the mores of a capitalistic society. It has produced "moral man" in an "immoral society", and while it provides a valuable incentive to personal decency it stubbornly resists social change.

(b) *Liberalism*. Liberalism arose as a protest both against an uncritical, unscientific, and dogmatic religion and against the thwarting of human values in an unjust social order. There is thus a connection, though not complete coincidence, between liberalism in theology and in social attitudes. It has done in both areas a great work which is not yet finished. However, it has tended to over-estimate the power of human reason and the human will-to-improve, and thus has often attributed to disinterested ignorance what is really

due to enlightened self-interest. As a consequence it has emphasized error more than sin, development more than redemption, human achievement more than divine initiative.

(c) *Barthianism*. In protest against the immanentism of liberal theology and what is regarded as its humanistic implications, Barthianism reaffirms God's transcendence and man's utter powerlessness to save himself from sin. Its major interest is neither personal morals nor social change, but regeneration through the saving act of God as revealed in Christ. While there are few real Barthians in America, it has had much influence.

(d) *Realistic theology*. This aims to preserve the values of the other three types without their limitations. Like orthodoxy it recognizes the importance of religious reinforcement for individual morality, but it is less limited in its social vision. Like liberalism it adopts the historical approach to the Bible and stands for intellectual and personal freedom, but it is less optimistic regarding the world's evil and has less confidence in human powers. Like Barthianism it asserts the transcendence of God, the fact of sin, the need of salvation by faith through divine grace, and the reality of the incarnation, but it has no such cleavage between man and God or between reason and revelation as is characteristic of Continental theology.

As a result of these trends, both social and ideational, the opportunity for the serious cultivation of personal religious living is greater than it has been in the past two decades. The danger is correspondingly greater if the opportunity is neglected or misused.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Confessional Church in Germany

DER KAMPF DER EVANGELISCHEN KIRCHE IN DEUTSCHLAND, und seine allgemeine Bedeutung. By Dr. Arthur Frey. *Verlag der Evangelischen Buchhandlung, Zollikon.* Price : Sw. Frs. 4.50 ; 5.50.

Since the publication of Professor Nygren's book on the Church Conflict in Germany in 1934 no adequate general survey of the subject has appeared. In the meantime there have been newspaper accounts of arrests and decrees, pronouncements of ministers and theologians, depressing rumours of divisions between various groups within the Confessional Church and encouraging reports of great gatherings during the Evangelical Weeks. For those without inside knowledge it has become very difficult to understand the deeper significance of these developments. Dr. Frey's book brings Professor Nygren's up to date, places the whole struggle in its historical setting, and is of the greatest assistance in explaining the issues involved.

His method is largely analytical. Chapters, well illustrated by quotations, explain the character of the German Faith Movement, the Mythos of the twentieth century, and the movement of the German Christians. Two chapters deal with the development of the National Socialist State and its relation to the Confessional Church. The account of the Confessional Church itself gives the essential minimum of historical facts, but is chiefly occupied with a penetrating and moving account of the religious significance of the struggle. The text of the German edition was finished in July 1937 ; but there has been no important change in the situation since then. Karl Barth has written an introduction. An English translation will shortly be published by the S.C.M. Press.

F. H.

A British Mouse

CIVITAS DEI. Vol. 3. By Lionel Curtis. *Macmillan and Co., Ltd.*,
London Price : 5s.

The reviewer recommends this brief and lucid study of the nature of God, man and society to all students who wish to sharpen their wits in satire, for here is the *reductio ad absurdum* of pseudo-rationalism. The mountain has labored through three volumes to produce — a mouse, a very British mouse!

Mr. Curtis, using the empirical approach, argues that the realization of the Kingdom of God must be the achievement of man alone through his acceptance of the principle of duty to his fellow-men. He eschews as Hebraic (and therefore "authoritarian") the Christian doctrine of man's obedience to a sovereign God, and substitutes the Greek concept of man's duty to his neighbors. "And who are a man's neighbors", inquires Mr. Curtis, "but all those who stand in need of man's help?" "The first system of society which sank its foundations down to this bed-rock", he continues, "was the Greek Commonwealth . . . The Kingdom of Heaven, the City of God, the fabric of society bound together by the infinite duty of each to all is not to be realized as the author of Genesis thought: that order issued from chaos . . . It was first reduced to practice in Greece . . . by men who did not realize at all what they had done . . . A thousand years after the time of Jesus it began to emerge again in alpine communities, in Italian cities, but also on a national scale in England" (!) And again: "the achievement of the national commonwealth was postponed for ages till at length it was realized in England" (II)

All that remains now for the full realization of the Kingdom of God is that this national commonwealth (England) become an international commonwealth. Mr. Curtis boldly advances a plan for the achievement of this *summum bonum* (the Kingdom of God) which men through the ages have lived and died to realize. The plan is, to say the least, neat and ingenious. It consists in the realization of the following steps:

1. The nations of the world are not yet ready to live up to the present Covenant of the League of Nations. Reorganize the

League on the basis of a new Covenant omitting articles 10 and 16 which have served merely "to lure Abyssinia to her doom".

2. The "most important and critical" step must then be taken by two nations of common language, similar constitutions, and whose security depends upon each other. These nations must form an international commonwealth which will be the nucleus of a world commonwealth. And who is to do this? Australia and New Zealand! "The initiative would have to come from Australia and New Zealand. I cannot resist the conclusion that one or other of these minor commonwealths holds, though it does not know it, a key to the door which, until it is opened, imprisons the whole of mankind." Gradually other nations would be drawn into this international commonwealth, yielding their national sovereignty — in order to protect their trade routes!

While expressing bitter opposition to dictatorships, Mr. Curtis is nevertheless able to affirm that he "can see no hope for the future unless some conscious effort is made to unite human society on the basis of the *infinite* claim of society to *unlimited* devotion from each of its members". Then why does he not see the hope for the future in the Fascist rather than the democratic powers? If this is the way the Kingdom of God is to be achieved, then Benedetto Croce becomes its prophet!

Such a fantastic treatment of the relation of the Kingdom of God and history would scarcely bear reviewing in these pages were it not the logical outcome of the analysis and aspirations of so many Christians. Here is the *reductio ad absurdum* of a rationalistic liberalism which, on the social plane, is blind to the realities of the struggle for power in history, and on the individual plane, misses completely the depths of life and the critical character of human experience, forever hovering on the brink of nothingness and meaninglessness. The smugness, the self-righteousness, the finiteness of man's pre-suppositions, conditioned by nation and class, which characterize *Civitas Dei*, are the painful evidence that man cannot by simply taking thought and cultivating idealistic aspirations change his own nature and the course of history. To stake one's life on ethics, denying the necessity for man's absolute loyalty to a sovereign God (which can be the only valid source of ethical behavior) is to fall inevitably into such pitfalls. Man, even at his best, without the corrective of such a loyalty, is always blind to his own egotism. He is always doing precisely what Mr. Curtis does when he identifies the order of the Kingdom of God with the particular order of the British empire: making the finite and relative values he knows the infinite and

absolute values for all men at all times. Even if one does not take Mr. Curtis' more obvious slips seriously, one cannot but feel that his "city of God" is built upon very shifting sands.

R. T.

Christian Anthropology

THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MAN. By T. E. Jessop, Robert L. Calhoun, N. N. Alexeev, Emil Brunner, Austin Farrer, W. M. Horton, Pierre Maury. *George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London.* Price : 8s. 6d.

Each of these seven Essays is so rich in content that it should be discussed and studied on its own merits. But this would be beyond the scope of this review. The book as a whole raises in our mind some more fundamental issues. What is its intention and meaning? To help us understand and live up to our human destiny? To build a Christian anthropology? For whom is it written? For the specialist? Evidently not. For the average layman? If so, let us confess it will seem to be in some of its parts rather academic and abstract, and very remotely related to the problem of human destiny as faced in real life, in our twentieth century world.

These Essays are a sincere attempt to meet the layman on his own ground. And this is why, I suppose, they deal first with the scientific approach to the problem of man, then with "humanitarian modernism", then with Marxism, as three typical interpretations in our day.

We agree with Professor Jessop's very clear distinctions between the realm and task of science and that of religion; we only regret that he leaves out (for, from his point of view, very wise reasons) the domain where today a great deal of confusion occurs, namely, psychology. We find it more difficult to follow Professor Alexeev in his "philosophical anteroom" where Christians and Marxists are supposed to meet, while as "believers" they have no common ground; for how can a Christian build up a philosophy apart from his belief?

It is stated somewhere in this book that it is always heresies which have forced the Church to define her own position; but the Church, if I am well informed, never took her start in the heretic's point of view to restate her own. She stood on her own feet, that is on the solid ground of God's Revelation, and affirmed her own position

in such terms that the heretical or non-heretical elements in the other positions became clear.

In this book, the Church's position is neither one nor clear. No thoroughgoing attempt is made to build our Christian Understanding of Man on a Biblical foundation. It is a striking and amazing fact that theologians should write a full volume on such a theme without one single chapter, — I believe not one page, — being given to Jesus' teaching about man. Pierre Maury's Essay is the only one which deliberately takes its starting point in God's Revelation, and centres on the fact of the Cross, — and does not feel the need of being apologetic for doing so. Several others only approach this side of the problem after long circumlocutions, and start from the philosophical rather than the theological angle.

Do Churchmen really think that we laymen want them to be apologetic for doing their job? And is not their first job to tell us what God says about man in His own revelation, and what He wants man to be? Only when we know *that*, shall we be able to discriminate the elements of truth contained in contemporary systems, or shall we know how and to what extent we can benefit by modern techniques toward a better understanding of our human nature and calling. (Let us not forget that for many laymen the psychiatrist has taken the place of the priest as spiritual adviser.)

We are aware that no systematic anthropology is to be found in the Bible; but it certainly contains deep enough insights to build one. If this were not the case, any attempt to build a *Christian* anthropology would have to be given up.

Next to the treasure-house of the Bible there is the treasure-house of the Church; the great affirmations of our Liturgies, our Confessions of sin and of faith with all their implications as to our status as created beings and our ultimate end and calling; the deep insights of the spiritual directors of the past into the complexities of human nature. Dr. W. Horton is the only one writer, I believe, who has explicitly taken the Church tradition into account.

As we close with a sense of disillusionment this book on *The Christian Understanding of Man*, we feel like going back to some of our great classics: to Shakespeare and to Pascal; to moderns like Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard. They *knew* so much more of the real mystery and tragedy, of the "greatness and misery" of man.

S. de D.

An Appeal to Intellectuals

PENSER AVEC LES MAINS. By Denis de Rougemont. *Editions Albin Michel, Paris.* Price : F. Frs. 15.—.

This is an interesting book to read. The style is often eloquent and epigrammatic. The argument is clear and thought-provoking. The theme is the place of culture in modern society. In the Western world culture, as something living and formative, has ceased to exist. A living culture unites the thought and action of individuals. It unites the intellectuals and the manual workers in a society. It is the nerve of a language which is forceful, precise and widely understandable. But during the last fifty years the cultural tradition of the West has not borne these fruits. Culture has come to be regarded as a corpus of dead works, inherited from the past, and studied by a privileged few. The thought and speech of the "intellectuals" have become unintelligible to the newspaper-nourished masses. The intellectuals themselves suffer from an inability to integrate their own thought and action. They alternate restlessly between violence which denies their thinking, and thinking which is unrelated to the real world in which men fight and suffer and create. The violence of the National-Socialist attack on the liberal tradition is partly explained by the failure of that tradition to satisfy the deeper longing of the human soul for inward unity and for membership of a community united by a sense of common purpose. If the "Western democracies" are not united by a faith equally alive and more profoundly true, they are doomed to decay and eventual "colonization" by the rejuvenated peoples of Central Europe.

But a deeper and truer common culture, expressed in a more adequate symbol than a *Führer* or a five year plan, may yet be found. Such a culture must be realistic in its attitude to facts. It must be violent, not in the sense of brutal, but as being willing to struggle in order to create. It must have the authority of an appeal to the deepest forces of the spirit of man. It must prepare men to take risks, to make sacrifices, to dare to be original. And withal it must be a spirit of discipline in style and expression. In one word, such a culture must be personal. It must be incarnated, not in any external symbol of state or blood or leader, of class or plan; but in complete human beings, whose personalities are fulfilled in heroism.

Now it is apparent from what we have written that when de Rougemont writes of "culture", he really means something more in the nature of a religious faith. He practically says as much at the end. If therefore the purpose of the book is to lead unbelieving intellectuals, through familiar paths, to the unfamiliar conclusion that the Christian religion is the answer to the deepest needs of their own personalities and of society, it is a book worth writing. But for the convinced Christian it is not so satisfactory. In spite of all his protests, de Rougemont's thought retains elements of romantic individualism and idealism. Moreover, he sometimes expresses himself with a certain preciousness. The total result is less profound and prophetic than one could have hoped, or than from some of his other essays one might have expected. Nevertheless, let me repeat, *Penser avec les Mains* is an interesting book to read.

F. H.

Is this Religion really Revolutionary ?

REVOLUTIONARY RELIGION. By Roger Lloyd, *S. C. M. Press, London.*
Price : 5s.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. By Cyril Hudson and Maurice Reckitt. *George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London.* Price : 7s. 6d.

These two recent volumes deal with the question of the relation of Christianity to society. Hudson and Reckitt state the problem admirably : "The fate of Christendom (in the Middle Ages) . . . turned upon whether man would emerge into this new enlargement of opportunity without the sacrifice of his duty to God and his fellows in the face of the rapid expansion of the economic possibilities of the age . . . The challenge involved over the whole field was a very great one, and the failure to achieve the transition was clearly implicit in the situation before the Reformation, and contributed to precipitate it. *The problems then emergent have never been solved, and have protracted themselves into the perilous deadlocks of the present day.* The task of religion today is to perceive that this is so, and secondly

to restate the issues, so that the transition which the fourteenth century failed to achieve the twentieth may recognize as the condition upon which human liberty is compatible with creative social order" (pp. 303-304). Both volumes are concerned with the problem of achieving a society in which "human liberty shall be compatible with a creative social order". Here the similarity between the two volumes ceases, not only because they are different in the subject matter they bring to bear on the problem, but because there are vast differences between them in quality.

Canon Lloyd treats the problem in *Revolutionary Religion* as it manifests itself in the contemporary conflict of ideologies in the relationship of Christianity to Fascism and Communism. Both the statement and the treatment of the issue are so extremely superficial as to be almost meaningless, were it not that his position is so characteristic of large groups of Christian laymen and clergy in both America and England. Space precludes any detailed analysis of the contradictions and errors of fact which mark the whole volume. The tone of it is completely bourgeois, because the pre-suppositions inherent in Canon Lloyd's attack on Communism and Fascism are bourgeois values, unredeemed by any hint of the Christian critique of all social values. Briefly stated, Canon Lloyd's thesis is that we live in a revolutionary period and are confronted by three revolutionary choices : Fascism, Communism and Christianity. Fascism and Communism are not analyzed in economic, political or sociological terms, but purely from the perspective of their threat to individualism and "the sacredness of every human personality". He thus is able to say that they are essentially the same, and to analyze them only in terms of their "totalitarianism". Christianity is "the more excellent way" — the *via media* — which must now wage war on Communism and Fascism. The Christian warfare has only two weapons, the "prayer and love of Christians for their Father and in Him for each other. These weapons will be found more than enough if they are only used by us all and we add no others to them. For this is the holy force, the authentic revolution" (p. 190). Nowhere is there an analysis of the historical necessities which gave birth to Communism and Fascism; nowhere is there any analysis of the nature of the society — bourgeois capitalist society — in which Christians are called on to pray and love. There is a vivid statement of the evils of "the Right and the Left", but no recognition of the predatory nature of capitalist society, of the brutality and injustice of Empires and nations which have not yet overtly moved Right or Left, or of the totalitarianism of bourgeois democracies (as pointed out by Denis de Rougemont in his article in this number). He attacks both

Communism and Fascism with apparent impartiality, but his attack on Communism is far the more vigorous. Fascism is attacked largely in theory, but Communism in both theory and practice. He says that "the new Soviet system has caused a greater weight of sheer human misery than any other operation that the world has ever known, and the hands of Stalin are redder with bloodshed than any other pair of hands in the existing world" (p. 12). Even if this were true, and it is not, the hands of both Protestant and Catholic Christianity are too stained with the blood of the sixteenth century — and before — to cry "wolf, wolf" in this fashion. Throughout his book, the author poses the *ideal* of Christianity over against the *practice* of Communism and Fascism. This is because his whole concept of Christianity is philosophically idealistic. "Humanly speaking, religion is the function of the imagination" (p. 22) accurately describes his whole approach. Is there not danger that this is precisely the Christianity in which men seek "moral sanctions" for their own desires and grope for a "spiritual aroma" — the religion of the imagination which Marx called "the opium of the people" because it dulls men to the concrete call of God (see Editorial and article of Professor Paul Tillich in this issue of *The Student World*)? There is far too much danger of hypocrisy in this Christianity. One of the chief attacks which Canon Lloyd makes on Communism and Fascism is that they have thrown out the Christian virtues of patience and humility. It was largely because Christianity was too content only to preach patience and humility to the workers that Marx was anti-Christian. It was partly because the victorious Allies of the World War preached patience and humility to the vanquished on whom they had wreaked their vengeance that Fascism will have none of these virtues. Both Communism and Fascism judge the hypocrisy of a Christianity too deeply enmeshed in middle-class capitalist values.

Throughout the book there is an identification of the function of the Church and of the individual Christian *as citizen*. Because the Church (as the *Una Sancta*) must never identify itself with any specific political party or philosophy, it does not follow that Christians as citizens do not have to choose between the concrete possibilities in every specific social situation. As Christians, they must qualify their decisions by the perspectives of their Christian faith, but because so often in our rôle as citizens we have only "the devil's choice", we cannot evade the responsibility to choose. As Christians we make our choices not on the basis of our own interests, but to achieve a larger measure of justice.

In short, to reduce the infinitely complex issue with which Christianity is faced in the contemporary world to "a simple choice

between Christ and chaos", as Canon Lloyd exhorts us to do by simply choosing between "Christianity and X" (whatever X may be) is far too simple. As Reinhold Niebuhr points out in his provocative book *Beyond Tragedy* — "The Christian faith does not defy the tragic facts of human existence by a single victory over tragedy; nor does it flee from the tragedy of temporal existence into a heavenly escape. These forms of Christian faith are deceptive"¹. Christians must especially be ware of solutions which enable them to *think* righteously, to *think* radically, but which save them the necessity of *acting* on their righteousness and on their judgement of the social system.

Let us not be deluded into thinking that the fruits of Christianity—love, justice and peace can be achieved in history without offending or injuring any one or any point of view.

The Church and the World by Canon Hudson and Maurice Reckitt is a very different treatment of the problem of Christianity and society. It is a source book of immense value to student and layman in understanding the history of the impact of the Christian faith, experience and institutions on the society of man.

It is an able and exceedingly well-documented account beginning with the Old Testament and carrying through the great mediaeval period which culminated in Thomas Aquinas and Dante. It is thus only the first volume, but because of the growing interest in the Thomistic system as a possible solution of the contemporary problem of the Christian and society, it is extremely important.

Both volumes under review here presuppose a specific *Christian* sociology. The difficulty with this theory is that it fails to take sufficient account of the fact that economic morality always waits upon the economic necessities, as the whole mediaeval concept of "just price" and the laws against usury show. The authors of *The Church and the World* claim that the failure of the Church "to remain effective in this sphere (laws against usury) was an intellectual rather than a moral one", but the source they quote indicates that it was an *economic* difficulty: "With the increased opportunities for profitable investment it became increasingly more difficult to demonstrate that any particular case of interest-taking was really usury in the meaning of the (ecclesiastical) act. In such circumstances wholesale interest-taking, both legitimate and illegitimate, came in with a rush. The old barriers of the Canon Law were simply swamped under the flood. Where the Church failed was in not trying to think out the whole

¹ Reinhold NIEBUHR : *Beyond Tragedy*, p. 120

problem afresh" (N. E. Egerton Swann in *The Christian Tradition Regarding Interest and Investment*). Usury ceased to be immoral, because the economic necessity of a growing commercial society required it. No amount of "thinking out" the problem could change the fact that credit was not required for commerce and industry at the time of Aquinas when opportunities for lucrative enterprise were negligible, and that by the fifteenth century "rewards for enterprise became greater and greater . . . so that it became more and more evident that anyone locking up his money in a loan was losing opportunity for profit" (p. 286). To seek to return to the ethical concepts of the Middle Ages to meet the problem of social ethics in modern complex, highly integrated, necessarily impersonal industrial and commercial life is impossible. We cannot take the specifics of the thirteenth century and seek to make our economic life conform to them. Messrs. Reckitt and Hudson recognizing the ethical superiority of mediaeval "just price" over our price system administered for profit, are on dangerous ground where they infer that by merely tampering with our monetary and price system, through the Douglas Social Credit plan, we can restore an ethical basis to the present economic order (pp. 275-277). As we view the truly monumental Thomistic system, we have to recognize the degree to which the eternal Christian truths about the personal and mutual character of human relations were mixed up with the very relative necessities of a simple agricultural economy on the one hand and an aristocratic and hierarchical society on the other. And it was almost as totalitarian as those which Canon Lloyd castigates, as any heretic would testify. The Italian cities of the thirteenth century were a far cry from offering model case studies in Christian sociology!

This is not "thinking backwards" and judging mediaeval society by the canons of the twentieth century, which the authors admonish us to avoid doing, but rather recognizing that the social pattern of that age was moulded by historical conditions. These conditions no longer obtain in the modern world (e.g. a *united* Church which is the only source of order and culture). Therefore, to the degree to which modern Catholics point to the Thomistic system as a solution for our contemporary problems, we must beware of it, for in the twentieth century it can yield only a kind of Catholic Fascism.

The whole position which assumes a specific *Christian* sociology, whether it be the rational liberalism of Canon Lloyd or the Anglo-Catholicism of Reckitt and Hudson, needs to be examined in the light of the fact that Jesus Christ enunciated no principles for secular society to act by. It is the task of both the Church and individual Christians to judge every single society, however "Christian" its

pretensions, in the light of the prophetic ethic of the Old and New Testament which condemns all injustice and exploitation. The individual Christian must go beyond this and work in the political and social sphere to create the economic conditions out of which justice and equality can come.

R. T.

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